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## The Characteristics of Sufism in the Early Islamic Period

DR. JAVAD NURBAKHSH

*(Text of a Speech by Dr. Javad Nurbakhsh, Master of the Nimatullahi Order, for the Opening of a Three-day International Conference on "Persian Sufism: From its Origins to Rumi" at the George Washington University.)*

I am delighted to have the honor of opening this conference and wish to welcome all of you. My talk today concerns the basic characteristics of classical Sufism, that is, Sufism during the first centuries of Islam. Rather than go into a lengthy technical discussion, I will attempt to provide a general outline of the key aspects of early Sufism, aspects that for the most part have been lost today.

### 1. A Practical and Visionary Approach to the 'Unity of Being'

Sufi Masters of this era approached the Unity of Being from a practical rather than a theoretical perspective, through heart-insight and not the mind. Only the possessors of heart, those who have distanced themselves from the realm of self through love, are capable of gazing upon Unity with the eyes of Unity. The theoretical approach to the Unity of Being, on the other hand, is based upon a philosophy constructed by the intellect, and as such it belongs to the realm of the self.

Indeed, the theoretical approach to the Unity of Being poses many risks for those who embrace it, for one may

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## EDITORIAL

### OF TRUTH AND THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

by W. Emmett Small

*"Although Theosophical ideas have entered into every development or form which awakening spirituality has assumed, yet Theosophy pure and simple has still severe battles to fight for recognition."*

Those are words of H. P. Blavatsky over a hundred years ago to the American Convention in Chicago of April 22-23, 1888. Direct and clear they tell the story still for today. So we ask, What of the Theosophical Movement as we approach the last years of this century? Let us be honest. Let us face facts.

(I-a): A growing number of theosophical groups or Societies in different parts of the world seriously studying the writings of HPB and *The Mahatma Letters* and trying to put these Teachings into practice. (b): Increasing number of scattered theosophical students, no longer subserving an administrative body, also studying conscientiously and searching for truth.

(II-a): On the other hand, in larger T.S. groups or Societies still an acceptance of what is known as the Liberal Catholic Church based on the distorted ideas of C. W. Leadbeater opposed to true Theosophy; as well as other later self-styled gurus and their followers pandering to what an ignorant public cries for. (b): An increasing number, even among them, beginning perhaps hesitant appraisal of what they've been taught, awakening to the dangers facing the future.

Foreseeing dangers that the Movement would face, HPB stressed (again writing to the same American Convention) what we might call the great necessity: *Hold fast ever to TRUTH, to "Theosophy pure and simple."* But she also warned that in doing so there should be no 'orthodoxy'. It calls for careful thought.

Diversity is a universal fact of life. It does not mean discord among Theosophists — IF there is belief in basic Truth itself. That great underlying trust and belief should ever be the core of Unity despite individual variety in understanding or approaching it. HPB writes clearly on this:

*"Orthodoxy in Theosophy is a thing neither possible nor desirable. It is diversity of opinion, within certain limits, that keeps the Theosophical Society a living and a healthy body..."*

And, completing the thought, she warns of that necessary Diversity having "other ugly features." So what are they? And we quote here from our editorial in *The Eclectic Theosophist*, No. 45, March 1978:

*"...Does that diversity open doors to acceptance of actual distortion of teaching, pawned off on an inquiring public as the Theosophy of the Masters? We are in a cycle similar to the dawning years of the Christian era, the Fish Age. Now in the Aquarian beginnings, tumultuous in opportunity, shall the Movement go the same way, with emphasis on psychic vagaries, in vestures and outer trappings and the shell, while the reality, "the living and breathing spirit of Truth", fades away sought by the relative few? And when it comes to theosophical principles, is it an agreeable complacency that is preferred tolerant of the pull and trend of the times and hesitant of determined stand?..."*

Today, as interest grows in the transcendental and occult, and the wildest ideas are seized upon as genuine occult revelation, is there not urgency for Theosophists to make clear what Theosophy is, ...to not state what it is not? If, as H. P. B. declares, Theosophy is the source from which the religions of

the future will be born, if "it alone can furnish the beaconlight needed to guide humanity on its true path," what then is our duty?

So we see that in guidance of the T.S. method or form of work can change dependent on outer conditions and circumstances, but the driving inner force remains one with Truth. "I work for TRUTH and in accordance with my sacred pledge and vow, which I, at least will never break" — again HPB writing to Fellows of the American Section in the last years of her life. So we must not confuse the diversity of outer change with inner Truth.

It was the same with W. Q. Judge who worked so closely and loyally with HPB all his life. Dangerous conditions in the Movement demanded of him necessary action to preserve the true Teaching; and history knows of the break of the T.S. then into two main parts, called "the Split."

In the next century Katherine Tingley was ever loyal, too, to the original Teaching and Program, her method emphasizing a practical demonstration of Universal Brotherhood, at least its possibility, in her School on Point Loma.

And after her was G. de Purucker. His method again in working for the great Cause and devoting his full energies to spreading Theosophy was shown when he started some sixty years ago what was called the Fraternization Movement: Break down the barriers between the various Theosophical Societies, not then even on speaking terms. Get down to real study of Theosophy. Treat other T.S. workers with decency and respect even in disagreement. In a dozen years it succeeded in degree, and Theosophical world conditions will never be the same.

But let us take note of G. de P.'s last thoughts on this subject, written in 1941 during WW II. (See our extract in *E.T.*, Fall 1992, p. 6). We quote a few lines:

"So far as the Point Loma Society is concerned, it has absolutely no intention of trying to reunite with other

societies — The common work in the world will be just as well served by the different Theosophical Societies — [Diversity!] — following each its own path, but with cordial and fraternal relations amongst themselves, and especially *sympathy* by us towards others of other societies of theosophical bent, or Theosophical Societies which return to the original policies, teachings and procedures of the Masters and H. P. B. ..."

This seems to hint that for some years to come, and especially now for us in these closing years of this century, the method will be one of many theosophical groups, lodges, or individuals free from administrative control working along theosophical lines they find helpful under their own conditions and circumstances. And that then as the years advance and Theosophy "pure and simple" becomes more widely recognized that in itself will generate a Call, and a wider, more universal unity and union will result.

Our own work of Point Loma Publications, its growing number of published volumes since its founding in 1971, as well as the pages of our *Eclectic Theosophist*, attest to what we have striven for: holding firmly to the basic principles and Teachings brought by HPB and her Teachers, and sharing these with our growing number of readers around the world.

*Hold Fast to TRUTH.* This should be the undying motto of the Theosophical Movement, its Societies, Lodges, individual members. In those four words we find both daring challenge and daily opportunity.

.....  
I now step down from the editorial office of our quarterly *Eclectic*, and our son Kenneth will become Editor. He has been Associate Editor this last year, and has also been a member of Point Loma Publications since its founding and is its present Secretary. We trust he too will have the steady friendly support we ourselves have enjoyed these many decades for which we are deeply grateful.

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D.T. Suzuki spoke of Helena Blavatsky as "one who had truly attained," and praised her *Voice of the Silence* as being "true Mahayana Buddhism." The Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup, who translated the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* with Dr. W.Y. Evans-Wentz, said Blavatsky's writings showed "...intimate acquaintance with the higher lamaistic teachings..." and the sixth Panchen Lama wrote an introductory preface to the 1925 Peking edition of her *Voice of the Silence*. Here for the first time is a compilation in one volume of her perspective, both controversial and of stimulating value, for all interested in the Buddhist and Theosophic world view.

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misuse such a philosophy to justify an indulgence in various vices or offensive behavior by claiming that "all is Unity, so I can do whatever I want." Adherence to this philosophy may actually lead to moral decay, lowering an individual from the high station of humanity.

Rumi illustrates this danger in his story of the thief who enters an orchard and steals some apricots. The owner happens to come by at that moment and seizes him. "Are you not afraid of God?" he asks the thief. "Why should I be afraid?" replies the man. "This tree belongs to God, the apricots belong to God, and I am God's servant. God's servant is but eating God's property." At this, the owner orders his servants to fetch a rope and tie the man to the tree. "Here is my answer," explains the owner as he begins to beat the thief. In response, the thief exclaims, "Are *you* not afraid of God?" Smiling, the owner replies, "Why should I be afraid? This is God's stick, the rope belongs to God, and you are God's servant. Thus, I am only beating God's servant with God's stick."

In contrast to the theoretical approach to the Unity of Being, the visionary approach is founded upon love and practiced solely by those free of self-interest. As a result, it produces guardians of society and benefactors of humanity, exemplars of human excellence, such as Abu Sa'id Abe'l Khayr, Abo'l-Hasan Kharaqani, Bayazid Bastami, Hallaj and Ruzbehan.

The theory of the Unity of Being constitutes a philosophical doctrine. The visionary approach, however, involves a spiritual and practical path. The former is a doctrine taught and learned by the mind; the latter is a practice characterized by revelation and vision in the heart. The former increases one's intellectual knowledge; the latter distances one from self and brings one to life in God.

When Hallaj cried out, "I am the Truth," he was a flute being played by God's breath. When Bayazid ex-

*From the perspective of the Sufis, as long as you remain yourself, you cannot know God, the greatest veil between you and Reality being yourself*

claimed, "Glory be to Me," this was not Bayazid but God speaking through him.

## 2. Divine Love

The Sufi travels on the feet of love in order to reach Reality. Reason and intellect are unable to comprehend this Reality.

From the perspective of the Sufis, as long as you remain yourself, you cannot know God, the greatest veil between you and Reality being yourself. Only by the fire of divine love can this egocentricity be burned away. Moreover, such divine love arises; it cannot be learned.

Divine love may arise in the Sufi in one of two ways: through attraction and through traversing the Path. In attraction, God's love arises within the Sufi directly, without any intermediary, and the Sufi thereby forgets everything but God. In traversing the Path, the Sufi experiences love for the Master of the Path who then transforms this love into divine love. To put it another way, the Sufi travels with the aid of the Master, while clutching the lamp that seeks Reality. This lamp is lit by the Master with the breath of his sacred spirit, and its flame causes the Sufi to burn with divine love. As one Sufi poet puts it:

The beings of a hundred ascetic thinkers caught fire;  
This is the burning we place in the crazy heart.

For Sufis, the consequence of such divine love is that they become focused solely in one direction: Sufi Masters concentrate on God alone. In the words of Khwaja 'Abdo'llah Ansari, "Most people say 'one', yet remain attached to a hundred thousand. When the Sufis say 'one', however, they flee from their very identities."

Or, as Abo'l-Hosain Nuri puts it, "The truly aware are the Sufis. Most people look to God's bounty, whereas the Sufis look to Him alone. Others are content with His gifts; the Sufis are content only with Him."

It is said that Rabe'a was once asked if she loved God. "I have no love for anything else," she replied. She was then asked if she also hated Satan. "Not at all," was her answer, "for I am so in love with God that I have no room in my heart for hatred of Satan."

## 3. The Call to Worship of God

True Masters of the Path call their disciples to God, not to themselves. Their aim is to liberate disciples from self-worship or the worship of other individuals, and to guide them to the worship of God. They do not attract others to themselves for egotistical purposes or through the display of miracles and powers. Nor do they do so for the sake of worldly gain.

'Attar recounts the story of the son of an important figure who was one day sitting in the assembly of Abu Sa'id. Upon hearing the Master speak, he was so struck with remorse that he repented of his misguided life and pledged everything he owned to the Master, who subjected him to several years of degrading labor. By that time, the man had become an object of contempt to the local population who rejected him. The Master then instructed the other disciples to ignore him as well. Finally, he expelled the man entirely from his assembly. Severed completely from any expectation of society, the disciple took refuge in some ruins, where he flung himself to the earth and cried out, "O Lord, You see that no one accepts me. I feel nothing any longer but pain for You, and I take refuge in nothing but You."

After weeping like this for a time, the disciple was suddenly overwhelmed by a state which indicated that he had attained the goal for which he had striven. Back at the *khanaqah*, Abu Sa'id announced to his disciples that they should go with him to find the man he had expelled. They finally

found him in the ruins, still weeping. When the disciple saw the Master, he asked him why he had been made to undergo such humiliations. "You had severed all expectations of created being," Abu Sa'id replied, "but one veil yet remained between you and God: that veil was me. Now we have removed this too. Arise and return."

#### 4. Service to Others and Love for All of Humanity

One of the essential aims of early Sufi Masters was to encourage people to love and serve others, and to promote the development of positive qualities, setting the highest example of service to humanity themselves.

When Abu Sa'id was asked how many were the ways from creation to God, he answered, "According to one account, there are a thousand ways; according to another, as many ways as there are created beings. But the shortest and best way from created being to God is through kindness and service to others."

In the words of Rumi:

Regardless of whether people accept  
or reject you,  
Serve others for the sake  
of God.

And in the words of Sa'di:

True worship consists of  
service to others,  
not rosary, prayer mat and  
pious robe.

#### 5. Not Being Offended by the Harassment of Others

Hafez writes, "We keep faith, put up with blame and are glad, for on our path being offended is unbelief." The true Sufi can never be offended by anyone. Two factors are involved here. The first relates to the Sufi's lack of self. Being offended is an attribute of self-existence, arising from egocentricity. But the Sufi is non-existent, no one. Anyone who feels offended is conscious of having a separate existence. In being aware of both



himself and God, such a person is a dualist rather than an adherent to Divine Unity. The Sufi, however, is aware only of God.

The second factor involved here is that Sufis have submitted themselves totally to God. Thus, they are content with His contentment, accepting whatever happens as coming from Him. How then could they ever feel offense? Indeed, the degree to which the traveler on the Path is offended by the harassment of others constitutes a kind of touchstone by which he or she may be judged. The more free one remains from being offended, the more liberated from self one is, and hence the more Sufi-like.

#### 6. Chivalry

For the Sufis, chivalry has a very particular connotation. They understand it to signify the performance of altruistic service to others while remaining free of any self-consciousness with respect to the value of that service. Many Sufi Masters have spoken about such chivalry.

Abu Hafs Haddad has said, "Chivalry means being fair to others, while not expecting fairness in return."

According to Jonaid, "Chivalry occurs without any awareness of the act being chivalrous. The one who performs such an act never says, 'I did this.' "

When Kharaqani was asked about chivalry, he replied, "Were God to bestow a thousand bounties upon your

brother and only one upon you, you would nevertheless give this one bounty to your brother as well."

#### 7. Respect for the Beliefs of Others

True Sufi Masters have always respected the followers of other religions, disapproving of disputation, prejudice and fanatical behavior in matters of religion. As Kharaqani has put it, "Those whose hearts are engaged in distinguishing between what is right and wrong with respect to God remain far short of the goal."

#### 8. Self-Sufficiency, Altruism and Lack of Worldly Attachment

Among the distinctive qualities exhibited by Sufi Masters, especially those of the early period, we can also include: self-sufficiency, altruism and a lack of any attachment to worldly things (in other words, freedom from the desire for anything of the world). Selflessly committed to the service of others, these Sufi Masters possessed nothing and generously gave away to other Sufis and to the poor whatever came to them. If a Sufi had no money to give, he would bestow his cap, turban or cloak. However needy he might be materially, he would be without need spiritually. This station of self-sufficiency indicated his total detachment from all traces of existence, from all worldliness and egocentricity.

Such Sufi Masters were concerned solely with God, being detached from the world both outwardly and inwardly. Having eliminated all vestiges of self-existence, they waited patiently on the threshold of Absolute Being.

In conclusion, on behalf of George Washington University and the Nimatullahi Sufi Order, I would like to thank all the professors and scholars who grace this gathering with the results of their valuable research, thereby shedding further light on that practice of loving-kindness and true humanity that constitutes early Persian Sufism.

—Reprinted from SUFI:  
A journal of Sufism.

## THE CROSS OF INITIATION

by Elsie Benjamin

The author was private secretary to G. de Purucker from 1929 to 1942. She took shorthand notes of everything GdeP said to students in esoteric or regular theosophical gatherings, as well as all public lectures. World War II was on when GdeP died September 27, 1942. The following year, in May 1943, Elsie took the dangerous (and circuitous) voyage to England, her birthplace. She married Harry Benjamin, and despite all war difficulties they immediately started *Corresponding Fellows Lodge of Theosophists*, publishing what they modestly called a monthly *Bulletin*. The following article is from the February 1980, Number 398 of that *Bulletin*.

There was a time during the chequered history of the Theosophical Movement when strange ideas were afloat about Initiations. Too often it was mistaken to be something very exciting, sensational, easily attained, done for one without any effort of our own, and, when attained, something that set the initiated one apart and above one's associates. We (this Editor) are not qualified to write from personal experience, but the following from 'THOSE WHOKNOW' will help to bring the whole subject into perspective, and to answer questions being now posed by earnest young students.

We start with a passage from one of the relatively rare letters of Master M. when he took over temporarily the correspondence with Sinnett and Hume, while his 'younger' brother, K.H. was absent on his long initiatory trials.

"The whole individuality is centered in the three middle or 3rd, 4th and 5th principles. During earthly life it is all in the fourth, the center of energy, volitional. Mr. Hume has perfectly defined the difference between personality and individuality. 'The former hardly survives—the latter, to run successfully its sevenfold downward and upward course has to assimilate to itself the eternal life-power residing but in the seventh and then blend the three (fourth, fifth and seventh) into one—the sixth. Those who succeed in doing so become

Buddhas, Dyan-Chohans, etc. The chief object of our struggles and initiations is to achieve this union while yet on this earth. Those who will be successful have nothing to fear of during the fifth, sixth and seventh rounds. But this is a mystery. Our beloved K.H. is on his way to the goal—the highest of all beyond as on this sphere". (*Mahatma Letters* 77-78)

G. de Purucker in his *H.P. Blavatsky: the Mystery* explains:

"The Ancient Mysteries, such as those of Greece, contained teachings identical with [our Theosophical teachings]. The whole attempt in these ancient initiatory rites and ceremonies was the bringing of the human consciousness into recognition of its inseparable oneness with Universal Nature, and of man's kinship with the gods. 'The purpose and objective of all initiation', said Sallust, the Neo-Platonic philosopher, 'is to bring man into conscious realization of his inseparable unity with the order of the Universe and with the Gods'. Proclus, commenting on Plato's *Timaeus* says: 'Who does not know that the Mysteries and all initiations have for their sole object the withdrawing of our souls from the material and mortal life in order to unite us with the gods and to dissipate the darkness in the soul by spreading the divine light of Truth therein.'" (p.124)

In his *Esoteric Tradition* (I, 90) GdeP has some graphic word-pictures:

"...initiatory training and final success are but a quickening of or hastening over the evolutionary progress that all human beings undergo through the cycling ages". (*Fountain-Source of Occultism* 608-09); [also *Esoteric Teachings* XII, 75 fn.] "Initiation is a kind of temporary 'death' of all the lower man, a 'sleep' of the lower psychological nature, and a magical awakening in an intense awareness of the higher psychological part upon which is then radiating the inner light of the man's monadic consciousness. Thus it is that initiation comprises both sleep and death and uses these functions of consciousness in order to free 'the inner

man' for the marvelous experience on inner planes that initiation brings about".

But just as Master M. wrote in relation to the 7 principles in Man, GdeP in a private talk to students treats the subject from the standpoint of the Monads in Man, and specifically the Human Monad. This is in an article titled "The Cross of Initiation", given as the result of a discussion from an earlier meeting at Point Loma on the subject of Initiation. The Teacher can only give when the student calls it forth, and GdeP felt the call to go much more deeply into the subject. He emphasized these points:

1. Not only is the complete man a sevenfold entity, but each separate principle or monad is sevenfold.

2. He reminds us that it was in the middle of the Third Root Race that the Divine Beings, the Manasaputras, gave to the then unselfconscious man the Light of Mind, and these divine beings still watch over us, guide and inspire us.

3. Dealing now with our Human Monad, which is the one evolving on Earth at present, it is this Monad that is undergoing the initiation; and because we are now selfconscious beings, we each individually must make that leap upward to ally ourselves through initiation with our own Manasaputras; NOT one of the Divine Beings mentioned above, but the 'lesser' one belonging to the septenary human Monad. And it is this Monad that must stand alone, unaided.

4. To make this clearer he uses the age-old symbol of the Cross, the full sevenfold being represented by the vertical of the Cross, the human monad by the horizontal; and the point of intersection is where the human ego stands.

5. He refers to the symbolic Cries of Jesus on the Cross, the first one, the human monad standing alone, the second one triumphant when initiation has been won.

6. It can only be one who has been trained who can pass through these trials, because...

7. "This Cross is not an upright wooden Cross—the one upon which Jesus is supposed to have been crucified—but, as HPB explains (SD II 558),

"...The enigma can be unriddled only by searching for its key in the Mysteries of Initiation. The initiated adept...was *attached*, not *nailed*, but simply tied on a couch in the form of a Tau...He was allowed to remain in this state for three days and three nights, during which time his Spiritual Ego was said to confabulate with the gods, [and] descend into Hades..."

We quote GdeP again:

"It is the trained human ego who has to go through initiation unaided and protected by his higher parts. It is not those higher parts which are undergoing the tests....When the test comes we have to take it alone. The initiate is in the universe, a part of it, the pulses of the universe are pulsing through him. He has the help of the universe precisely because it is a part of him. But no one helps him by holding him up, or wiping the sweat from his brow, or giving him injections, etc. The soul must stand naked before the tests and conquer by its own powers. If it succeeds we have an adept. If it fails, there are other chances, *but he gets no help in a direct way whatsoever*".

By using this symbol of the Cross, we think GdeP has made more clearly than anywhere else in our literature this vexed question about 'which' Manasaputra. He felt urgently about this:

"I have told you a million times, it seems to me, that the human constitution is composite. There is a world of occultism in that one statement. 'Oh yes, composite, we know. It has a divine part, and a spiritual soul and a human soul, and an astral body and a physical body! Composite, yes, we understand.' I have not yet...found an adequate understanding among you of that simple statement that the human being is a composite being. I have attempted by both direct and devious ways and round about manners to awaken the intuition in your minds as to the

## *Initiation is a conscious awakening to the verities.*

meaning of this statement. I have called to your attention the fact that in addition to our usual exoteric enumeration of the seven principle, there are different monads in man, and that not only is every principle septenary or duodenary, but likewise that these different monads in man, while they form his constitution as we are now constituted, are nevertheless not all of them what I call 'I' and each one of you calls 'I'. That is the *human monad*....It is this human monad which must be, so to say, temporarily wrenched apart from all the other elements in the human constitution and must stand alone...And all initiation, which means all testing, all trial, all purification, of any monad or ego is for the purpose of bringing out the particular divinity of that ego which is being tested..."

It seems imperative to give GdeP's own words for what follows, because they contain the very spirit of what was a most inspiring meeting. We were listening to someone who *KNEW*, not merely knew of what he was saying.

*"Each new initiation —and fasten this thought to your minds —means coming a step nearer to that inner divinity which is not the ordinary Atman of us, of the upright of the cosmic Cross, but that divinity [our Inner God] which is the very heart and core of the human monad, as yet a feebly manifesting evolutionary pilgrim.*

...That is why the mystic teaching was given in the Christian scriptures: 'My divinity, my divinity, how thou dost glorify me.' No longer am I dependent upon the Manasaputra above me. From within my own cosmic essence, from within the god of my own human monad, I have become, and through myself, my own godhood."

GdeP emphasizes that the Greek makes it plain: not just 'My God', but "*Ho theos mou*", (the god of me), the triumphant Cry, 'How thou dost glorify me!' comes when one has reached

the goal; but it can only come in initiation after the other cry: 'O god of me, why hast thou forsaken me!'

"Yes, the god of the upright, because now the child must learn to walk, find himself. The god, his god, himself, his divine Self; not his 'other' god of the ordinary human constitution commonly called Atma-buddhi-manas. But he finds the Atma-buddhi-manas of the horizontal, so to speak, of the individual, of the *human monadic essence*...Every initiation that takes place, as far as I know, as far as I have been taught, in cosmic time or cosmic space, whether of man or of god or of being of the Underworld, is just the same thing in principle...This is why it is that death and initiation are identic. So is sleep. They are all one. Sleep is the same thing but happily veiled from our unwitting vision, from our ignorance and stupidity, because we are too sunk in desires of this world to see, to realize. Initiation is a conscious awakening to the verities. And death is exactly the same thing in even greater degree than initiation; but because it is not undertaken with one's own will for the specific purpose of quickening our evolution, it is an automatic function of the portions of our constitution. Perhaps I am wandering a little too far afield, but these are hints for you, your intuition may work on them..."

No wonder we are given such clear advice at the approach of death, whether of ourselves, or our loved ones whom we are caring for. That is why importance is given to the attitude in which we fall asleep at night, and the last thoughts we have before unconsciousness comes. Dr. de Purucker ended the meeting:

"I hope all the dear Companions will forgive me if I have spoken with too great emphasis tonight. I thought the opportunity was too good to miss."

Yes, the spirit of our discussion had called it forth from him!

\* The reference is to A.O. Hume's "Fragments of Occult Truth", found in *A Modern Panarion*, pp. 438-74. See also *Search & Find* for differences between INDIVIDUALITY and PERSONALITY.



## CREATIVE MEDITATION

Lama Anagarika Govinda

*The Message of the Sixth Patriarch*

Just as a mirror that was covered with dust

Shines forth like fire if it is cleansed,  
In the same way will he who has realized  
the nature of the soul

Attain the goal and liberate himself  
from grief!

—Shin-Shau

The Bodhi is not a tree at all,  
Nor is the mind a case of mirrors.  
When everything is empty,  
Where could the dust collect?  
—The Sixth Patriarch

The original mind, realized as the 'Buddha Mind' or the principle of bodhi, the urge for enlightenment, which is a latent property of every consciousness, is not only a reflection of the universe—something that "mirrors" the universe—but it is the universal reality itself. To the limited intellect it can only appear as a kind of metaphysical emptiness, the absence of all qualities and possibilities of definition. Bodhi is, therefore, not something that has originated or grown like a tree; neither is the mind a mere mirror which only reflects reality in a secondary capacity. Since the mind itself is the all-encompassing emptiness (*sunyata*), where could dust ever collect? "The essence of the mind is great, we say, because it embraces all things, for all things are of our nature." Thus it is not a question of improving or of cleansing our mind, but of becoming conscious of its universality. What we can improve is our intellect, our limited individual consciousness. This however, can never lead us beyond its own limits, because we remain in the strictly circumscribed circle of its inherent laws (of time and space, of logic and causality). Only the leap across the boundary, the giving up of all those contents which fetter us to those laws, can give us the experience of the totality of the spirit and the realization of its true nature, which is what we call Enlightenment.

The true nature of our mind embraces all that lives. The Bodhisattva-vow to free all living beings is therefore not so presumptuous as it sounds. It is not born from the illusion that a mortal man could set himself up as the savior of all beings or the redeemer of the whole world, but it is an outcome of the realization that only in the state of enlightenment shall we be able to become one with all that lives. In this act of unification we liberate ourselves and all living beings, which are potentially present and take part in the nature of our mind—nay, who are part of our mind in the deepest sense.

This is the reason why, according to the teachings of the Mahayana, the liberation from one's own sufferings, the mere extinction of the will to live and of all desires, is regarded as insufficient, and why the striving after perfect enlightenment (*samyak-sambodhi*) is considered the only goal worthy of a follower of the Buddha. As long as we despise the world and merely try to escape from it, we have neither overcome it nor mastered it and are far from having attained liberation. Therefore it is said: "This world is the Buddha-world, within which enlightenment can be found. To search after enlightenment by separating oneself from the world is as foolish as searching for the horn of a hare." For: "He who treads earnestly the path of the world, will not see the faults of the world."

In a similar way we should not imagine that by the suppression of thought or of our intellectual faculties, we can attain enlightenment. "It is a great mistake to suppress all thought," says Wei Lang, the Sixth Patriarch. Ch'an meditation is the way to overcome the limitations of our intellectual attitude. But first we must have developed our intellect, our capacity to think, to reason and to discern, before we are able to appreciate Ch'an. If we had no intellect, i.e., if we had never developed and mastered it, we could not overcome or go beyond it; only what we master is really our own. The

intellect is as necessary for the overcoming of mere emotionality and muddle-headedness as intuition is necessary for overcoming the limitations of the intellect and its discriminations.

Reason, the highest property of the intellect, is what guides our purposive thought. Purposes, however, are limited; and therefore reason can operate only in what is limited. Wisdom (*prajna*) alone can accept and intuitively realize the unlimited, the timeless and the infinite, by renouncing explanations and by recognizing the mystery, which can only be felt, experienced, and finally realized in life—and which can never be defined. Wisdom has its roots in experience, in the realization of our innermost being. Reason has its roots in thought. Yet, wisdom will not despise either thought or reason, but will use them where they belong, namely in the realm of purposeful action, as well as for the pursuit of science and for coordinating our sense impressions, perceptions, sensations, feelings, and emotions into a meaningful whole.

Here the creative side of our thought comes into play, converting the raw material of experience into the perception of a reasonable world. How big or how small this world is, depends on the creative faculty of the individual mind. The small mind lives in the world of his ephemeral wants and desires, the great mind in the infinity of the universe and in the constant awareness of that fathomless mystery which gives depth and width to his life and thus prevents him from mistaking his sense world for ultimate reality. He, however, who has penetrated to the limits of thought, dares to take the leap into the Great Emptiness, the primordial ground of his own boundless being.

Tantric Experience. There are as many ways toward realization as there are thinking beings. Just as every normally gifted person has the potentiality of becoming a physician or a scientist, so every individual has the potentiality to become enlightened in the course of this life or in later existences. But just as one does not become



a physician or a scientist by merely sitting and waiting, in the hope that these hidden qualities may come forth and reveal themselves, so one does not become enlightened by merely leaving it to nature. Conscious effort and aspiration are required.

This is why Buddha Sakyamuni emphasized *virya*, effort, energy (which is regarded as being his particular quality among the five Buddhas of our world-cycle) as one of the essential factors of enlightenment. This factor, however, depends on clear awareness (*smṛiti*; Pali: *sati*) and insight into the Dharma, in the ethical as well as in the universal sense, i.e., the discriminating knowledge of what is Dharma and what is not (*dharma-vicaya*), out of which arises the certainty that there is something worthwhile to make an effort for, and that our energy is aimed in the right direction. Unless we behold the mountain peak in all its majesty and sublime beauty, we shall never feel the urge to climb it. *Virya*, therefore, is not a laborious or forced effort, but a joyful attitude, a spontaneous urge.

Thus, the very figure of the Buddha becomes the symbol of enlightenment with whom the Tantric Buddhist tries to identify himself in his meditative practice (*sadhana*). He knows that this figure is the symbol of his own potentialities. Potentiality, however, is not yet reality and, therefore, the often heard dictum "Thou are Buddha" would merely open the door to complacency and self-deception if taken as an accomplished fact instead of an assurance of our inherent possibilities.

Our "unconscious nature" (which modern psychology has rediscovered) cannot be equated with our innate Buddha-nature, because the former equally contains demonic as well as divine qualities, cruelty as well as compassion, egotism as well as selflessness, delusion as well as knowledge, blind passion and darkest drives as well as profound longing for light and liberation. Freud associates the Unconscious mainly with all negative qualities and all rejected and sup-

pressed or unassimilated contents of the human mind, which are hidden in the "underground cellars" of our consciousness. Jung, on the other hand, is more inclined to see the Unconscious as the source of divine inspiration. Both these views are somewhat arbitrary, just as is the idea that the Buddha-nature lies "ready-made," hidden, or is already present in every sentient being and would break through in its completeness and perfection if we suppressed all thought-activities, judgments, and volitional decisions. This would amount to a complete rejection of our individuality, i.e. of a focalized consciousness, without which perception, ratiocination, discrimination, and comprehension—in fact, all mental activity—would be impossible.

If we mistake the momentary focus for a permanent and independently existing unity or an autonomous "I," then this consciousness gets fixed in a one-sided position and becomes a hindrance. However, as a relative point of reference which establishes a relationship between past and present experiences, the "I" or the notion of a perpetually self-creating inner center is an essential feature of the structure of a consciousness that is aware of itself and capable of realizing its own relativity, as well as its relationship to the world in which it lives. "The same regulating forces, that have created nature in all its forms, are responsible for the structure of our psyche and also for our capacity to think." (W. Heisenberg)

It is not enough to penetrate to the intuitive consciousness of universal unity unless we have realized also the opposite pole, the distinguishing wisdom of inner vision and spiritual discernment which awakens our sense of values and self-responsibility. It is not sufficient to identify ourselves with the oneness of a common origin or a potential Buddhahood, unless we take the decisive step toward the transfor-

mation and reintegration of the divergent tendencies or elements of our psyche.

Just as an artist creates a work of art by using the manifold materials at his disposal and by integrating them into an organic whole, in which universal laws and aspects of reality are revealed in an imaginative individual form, so the meditator should create a significant and valid inner cosmos and become one with it. This is the way of the unfoldment and reintegration of Tantric meditation, as represented in the mystic circle of the Mandala and its archetypal symbols.

As to the self-responsibility mentioned above, it clearly presupposes the development of a centralized individuality, which is as important as the fact of its dynamic (non-absolute) character. Therefore the precondition of all meditational experience consists in becoming more and more conscious of the inner center.

The successful I is not a rigid point but the capacity for movement around a firm standing axis, and a capacity for transformation without loss of individual form, and a penetrability which yet permits no breakdown of its boundaries.

The stable axis around which our "I" revolves could be identified with the direction of karmic evolution, by which the causally connected or mutually dependent successive existences create the psychic continuity which enables us to proceed toward enlightenment in a gradual process of maturation that may stretch over many lives.

There is no doubt that this process can be hastened to a great extent by turning our attention inward and gaining a true insight into our own nature, the first and most important step on the Eightfold Path, as a precondition for the realization of all further steps. We are not concerned here with right or wrong views or opinions in the intellectual sense, but with a direct, unprejudiced, intuitive insight into the true nature of things, especially ourselves.



## INDIAN CHELAS ON THE MASTERS

The following is the Foreword by Michael Gomes to this 42-page booklet of contributions by early Theosophists on the subject of the Masters (published by the Vasanta Press, The Theosophical Society Adyar, 1992).

In 1991 the Adyar Lodge made a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the early history of the Theosophical Society by publishing S. Sarada's reminiscences of her conversations with Soobiah Chetty (1858-1946). An important part of this narrative was his experiences with the Masters.

For Theosophists of today the Masters, grand ideals as they are, may seem as distant facts. This was not the case in the early days of Theosophy

in India. Mme. Blavatsky herself has acknowledged that "One of the chief factors in the reawakening of Aryavarta, which has been part of the work of the Theosophical Society, was the ideal of the Masters." But even during her own time misconceptions arose about the adepts, and this led a number of their pupils to put on record their contact with the Masters.

A number of these accounts were printed in *The Theosophist* when Mme. Blavatsky was editor. As these accounts are in obscure or hard-to-find sources, the Adyar Lodge has decided to publish a collection of the most important ones, not only for the inspiration of the disciple but also as an

aid to researchers and historians. Here the reader will find for the first time in one place the statements of Damodar K. Malavankar, Bhavani Shankar, S. Ramaswamier, Casava Pillai, Mohini Chatterji, and Soobiah Chetty. An Appendix containing a letter by Mme. Blavatsky on the subject has been added to complete the selection.

It is hoped that in spite of any shortcomings in this collection, due to the excessive zeal of its contributors, the reader will get a glimpse of the reality that inspired many of the early members in India to make the Theosophical Society such a dramatic success.

I thank the President and Committee Members of the Adyar Lodge, for the opportunity to share this material with others.

—Michael Gomes

## SAPEVA TUTTO! (THE KNOW-ALL!)

This is the title Franco Cuomo chooses to describe Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), who was "like a walking encyclopedia." (*Ulisse 2000*, December, 1991). At the age of twenty-three, Pico published 900 theses which he hoped to discuss publicly in Rome with other learned men of his time. Pico was, Cuomo says:

An intellectual who personified the fervent desire for knowledge that existed during the Renaissance and managed to amalgamate such a variety of learning and experience in his short life (he died at thirty-one) as to become, alongside Marsilio Ficino, one of the leaders of the Florentine Neoplatonist movement which sought to reconcile the world of magic with that of religion. ...Young Pico della Mirandola makes an explicit reference to these incredibly ambitious aims in his oration *On the Dignity of Man*, explaining that in his theses he intended to bring the Aristotelian and Platonic philosophies together to create a new mode of thinking by which it would be possible to arrive at a solution to



any problem, human or divine. How? By applying the *ars numerandi*, the science of numbers, the Pythagorean theories which by their very nature are universal.

The intellectual leaders of the Holy See, after examining the theses, found evidence of heresy in thirteen of them. When Pico replied with an *Apologia* in defence of his position, his reaction was pronounced diabolical and all of his theses were condemned as heretical. Pico was arrested and imprisoned.

He would in all probability have been burnt at the stake, had Charles VIII not granted his release for political motives. ...Thus Giovanni Pico della Mirandola returned to Florence and...dedicated himself completely to his research, investigating the most obscure areas of universal knowledge. Helped by his surprising familiarity with the languages fundamental to

ancient wisdom (from Greek to Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic) he continued to pursue his dream of creating a harmonious culture based on a knowledge of all the traditions that had sprung up in the garden of civilization.

The *Oration on the Dignity of Man* is Pico's greatest work. Its basic theme is that every man is a potential angel, because he is capable of becoming one. *Arguments Against Astrology* discusses the inevitable limits astrology imposes on free thinking. *Eptaplo* is an analysis of the seven days of Creation, "in which he explains the reasons for man's having been created in God's image." *On Being and Unity* evaluates the many-sided aspects of man's nobility of spirit as a means of progress for the individual and humanity in general.

Cuomo says that Pico became a follower of Savonarola and made his peace with the Church just before his death. This claim was almost always made for "free thinkers" in the centuries and countries where the Catholic Church was "all-powerful." Other records indicate that Pico della Mirandola was poisoned.

*Theosophy*, June, 1992

"On the Lookout"

## INTERVIEW WITH COSTEAU

An interview with Captain Jacques Costeau, founder of the Costeau Society, appears in the Winter 1992 issue of *Lotus*, subtitled *The Journal of Inner Peace, Mindfulness and Compassionate Living*. The main point made is the need to educate the public in the urgent problems that we face concerning the environment. People are better informed today in these and other matters, he believes, than, say, 15 years ago, but they are less human; nor are they necessarily better educated. Drawing a distinction between education and instruction, he says:

"A person is well educated when he knows how to act or to behave in difficult situations. Since antiquity, the problems of education have consistently been the subject of masterpieces in tragedy and theatre, in the books of our souls. No masterpiece has ever been written on mathematics or chemistry or physics, all of which are labeled education. But it's only instruction..."

When you stuff the brain of a kid or of a student with things to remember or things to be interrogated about on a final exam, the kid has no time and no incentive to think about any-

thing other than proving what he has learned. That's all. And what they learn has nothing to do with real life and real problems. We are social beings, and to live in society with the high degree of mind that we have requires education. As soon as education declines, the behaviour of societies goes to chaos. It's a danger that is comparable to the atomic bomb.

One who is truly educated, Costeau believes, has an ethic that puts value on protecting life and the rights of others. Today, few give a thought to future generations, and that is a consequence of lack of education:

As soon as people become what we call "developed," they centre all of life on themselves—having a good time, a good life, short-term benefits, short-term pleasure—to such an extent that we come to the stupid conclusion that the only yardstick we have to evaluate anything is money...

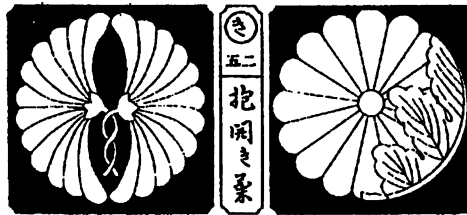
There is a cost/benefit analysis on everything, which means nothing, because it's evaluated only in dollars. How do you evaluate the loss of a

child? How do you evaluate the death of a bird? How many dollars is a butterfly? How many dollars your son? It's nonsense. Why do we want to quantify everything? ...Beliefs and feelings and enthusiasm and joy and sorrow and terror are all human feelings that cannot be quantified...

We are vandals of the earth. We are destroying everything we inherited. And when I say destroying, I don't mean polluting. We also pollute, and pollution may bring about destruction after a long time. But we do it even faster by sheer vandalism. When you dry marshes, for example, to build a development, it's an act of vandalism because it is suppressing life in this area—nurseries for all sorts of creatures that will never exist again. You take a river and change its course for a big public works. That's vandalism because it is sentencing an area to death.

We need to think more in terms of long-term consequences and solutions than short-term gains. The future of humankind, and of all life on earth—for man and nature are inseparable—is what ultimately matters, and it is only when we think in these terms that we are well educated.

*The Theosophical Movement*  
(U.L.T., Bombay, June 1992)



## WHEN SCIENTISTS DISAGREE

"The fastest way to get many archeologists' blood pressure to skyrocket is to suggest that Clovis, New Mexico, might not be the first prehistoric site in the New World," Tim Appenzeller reports in *Science* (Feb 21):

For the last 50 years, the received wisdom has been that the 11,500-year old artifacts found at Clovis were made soon after the first Americans found their way across the Bering landbridge. Those who have dared question the consensus have met with harsh criticism, and they haven't changed many minds.

For the past two years Richard MacNeish, a respected figure in New World archeology, has been excavat-

ing in Orogrande Cave, in New Mexico. Bones, chipped stones, charcoal and what is believed to be an ancient human palm print, proves, he says, that ancient hunters were in the area more than 30,000 years ago. Experts agree that the site is a fascinating one for paleontologists. Bones of camels, extinct horses, and other prairie species litter the lowest strata in the excavation. The bones lie in a clear stratigraphic sequence. MacNeish maintains that it is an archeological site as well because his tests show that the patterns of chipping couldn't have been produced by animals...and only human beings could have brought the stones into the cave in the first place, since nearly half of them represent rock types found

nowhere in the cave. But other scientists refuse to be convinced despite MacNeish's most dramatic evidence:

A human palm print on a fragment of fire-baked clay, 27,900 years old according to a carbon date from nearby charcoal. But the doubters don't think the print proves anything—it may not be human, they say, and if it is human it may not be ancient.

The controversy has reached the point where it is suggested that another archeologist should look at the site and any digging be done by an independent operator. But MacNeish is planning to go back. He vowed as he left the meeting, "We're going to get a lot more evidence before we're through."

*Theosophy* (ULT Los Angeles, June 1992), "On the Lookout"



## RYOKAN'S BALL

by Jay Warren Clark

[Professor of Religious Studies, Grossmont College, San Diego, CA]

In Japan today, both in and out of academic circles, it is still possible to end an argument with an appropriate reference to, say, Confucius or the Buddha. This is not at all the case in the modern West where our sages are all dead and we attempt, self-consciously, to live entirely out of ourselves. Generally speaking, in the East, sacred tradition is everywhere alive. In the West, it is virtually dead. This is a dramatic contrast and provides the necessary focus from which we must begin if we are to look at Asian art with understanding. We must begin with 'contrast' for a very simple reason: if we do not understand others - and, if our study of others is not primarily and at the same time an attempt to understand ourselves, then our study will necessarily be empty and vain. Any study that is not an attempt to understand oneself is a subtle insult to the high culture(s) that surround us. Who, after all, has mastered Western culture?

This particular contrast, Sacred East/Secular West, I have also called 'dramatic.' Again, there is a very simple reason for this. First, the starkness of the contrast points beyond *contrasts* to *contraries*, and thereby raises the question of whether cultural differences point to essential and therefore ungetoverable differences. This is where all the drama, and passion, of our dialogue lies.

This is the question: Do cultural differences belong to surfaces or to depth? This question must be asked because it illustrates the point at which cultural differences can become either solidified or eradicated. Clearly, if we do not address the question of whether or not our Asian brothers and sisters are really that, namely brothers and sisters, then we cannot hope to have our dialogue with the East taken seriously. If we do not ask this es-

entially dramatic question, then our dialogue will be found out for what it really is: the contented curiosity of intellectuals, or the wolfish utilitarianism of the various sharks that inhabit the Pacific Rim.

The genesis of our approach can be illustrated with a little story. Some years ago, when I was a graduate student, I mentioned to one of my elder professors the fact which introduced our present essay, namely, that the ancient sages of Asia still have a claim upon the conscience of modern Japanese people. His response was immediate. He said with genuine surprise, "Is that right?" and added, somewhat sadly to my ear, "Oh, that's all finished here. And from what I've heard, in Europe as well."

It was a telling comment and helped me more than most books to understand the situation we are in, in the modern West. That situation is tragic; we are in desperate need of the very thing we cannot take seriously, the content of our own spiritual heritage. For us, that content is no longer intelligible. We are about as likely to offer a quote from the Bible over cocktails as we are to trade our posturepedics in for buffalo robes.

Again, this is true in and out of academic circles.

We have become so sophisticated, so egalitarian, so self-satisfied in our modernity that the past has lost its status as foundational. To be sure, the past is "interesting" for a great many people, even historians, but it is no longer the root ground on which we work out the meaning of our lives. Sacred tradition and its history no longer undergird and support our attempts at self-understanding. We no longer look back.

The word "classic," for example, no longer refers to valued/needed content, but has become a mere category, another verbal element in establishing "cultural literacy" - something we are ashamed to be without, but haven't the time to really think about, much less revivify! The result is that the notion of "value" (when not entirely meaningless) has become merely a troublesome conundrum. We have become like Francis M. Cornford's poignant description of Plato's "democratic" man. We take "everything by turns, and nothing long." Choices, when we make them, are no longer ruled by the heart's sensitivity to principle, but by the pure sterility of



objective circumstances. Necessity and not the heart rules in modern man.

The consequences of this are obvious. Modern man is alienated, or rather, he is "connected," but his connections are purely rational, and therefore the deep unifying movements of the human heart are absent. The results of this in life are represented in the opposite sides of the same untutored coin, irreverence and sentimentality. We are "irreverent" because in our arrogance we forget that real human problems are perennial, and imagine that we, with all our comforts, are closer to life than our ancestors—who possessed the same nature, but with fewer distractions. Ultimately, therefore, our irreverence is mere ignorance.

We are also "sentimental." We shy away from all extremes, and, as a consequence, the heart remains unacquainted with the depths of either light or dark. We know neither heaven nor hell. (Hermann Hesse, *Stephenwolf*) We, in fact, measure depth in surfaces. And, what is sentimentality if not a

*In a word, in valuing everything we have ended up valuing nothing—except the thing we have ended up knowing the least about, ourselves.*

shallow heart? The intellectual side of this is represented in the modern academy where shallowness is cultivated with great seriousness. There, where depth is now confused with specialization, the surface-mind rules absolutely. There we no longer study essences, (i. e., things), but discrete surfaces (i. e., phenomenon). Somehow, and strangely, narrow has become deep.

To be sure, in the West, we are sensitive and egalitarian, and pride ourselves on being so, but these are detached intellectual virtues and underscore the fact that modern man's one true love is himself. In a word, in valuing everything we have ended

up valuing nothing—except the thing we have ended up knowing the least about, ourselves. This is the spiritual irony of modern man. While his primary value is the personal and private self, he remains, to that self, a mystery. He is a mask, both happy and sad, but with no sound functional grasp of his own inwardness. Insofar, he remains bereft of any conscious access to the deep well of meaning that is his true Self.

This is the crisis that each mod-

ern person inherits and, generally speaking, the situation is no different within Western art. Art in the modern West has cut itself off from its spiritual roots. It has divorced itself from the past and in the process has raised irreverence to the level of method. (J. Barzun) The aesthetic principle behind this is summed up in the theory, "art for the sake of art." This bit of condescension, by way of a theory, is simply a writ of divorce which the artist has summarily given his community. Its meaning is that art is a world apart and meaningful only within the context of its own medium (feeling), which, conveniently, is non-transferable. You either have it, or you don't. As one great jazz artist said about the meaning of jazz, "If you have to ask, I can't explain." Art has given up, in other words, any responsibility before the need to explain itself in terms meaningful to the average citizen. The result is that art has become a contradiction, speech without predication.

This is a great loss which, though felt, is generally unrecognized. The reason for this is simple: art, in principle, is no longer understood as something that communicates intelligible ideas. Rather, it is understood as sheer "self expression." Where before the work itself was central (as the paying client well knew), now it is the artist himself. This is underscored by the fact that today people are not clients at all, but "collectors" and what they collect are not beautiful and useful works, but the names attached to mere "pieces." What is central today is not art, but name recognition. Again, art is self expression. The problem with this, however,

*Modern man is alienated, or rather, he is "connected," but his connections are purely rational, and therefore the deep unifying movements of the human heart are absent.*



is that the "self" that is "expressed" is too often merely the surface ego.

The tendency here to focus on the private ego is obvious and stands as a dramatic contrast to Asian (and traditional Western) artists who seek the higher Self, who seek Self understanding and not self expression. This brings us back to our original question: What is the nature of this contrast? Japanese artists, still under the influence of a traditional world view, seek the Self—not presuming to have it. Western artists, on the other hand, disregard their spiritual heritage, and attempt to "speak" entirely out of themselves. Does this mean that East and West can never meet? That no real communication is possible? Yes, of course, if we leave it with oil paint and *sumi, koto* and violin. But is that necessary? Is there no point of contact deeper than the splashes of surface culture? Of course there is. All sacred traditions point to one concern, the cultivation of the Self, and there are artists in the modern West that represent truthfully and beautifully that very concern. I will cite only one, the German poet, Rainer Maria Rilke. The work chosen, 'Archaic Torso of Apollo,' is particularly apt because it represents the reflections of a modern poet (i. e., artist) on a work of art itself. (Translation by Robert Bly.)

We have no idea what his  
fantastic head  
was like, where the eyeballs  
were slowly swelling. But his  
body now is glowing  
like a lamp  
whose inner eyes, only turned  
down a little,

hold their flame, shine. If there  
weren't light, the curve of the  
breast wouldn't blind you,  
and in the swerve of the thighs  
a smile wouldn't keep on going  
toward the place  
where the seeds are.

If there weren't light, this stone  
would look

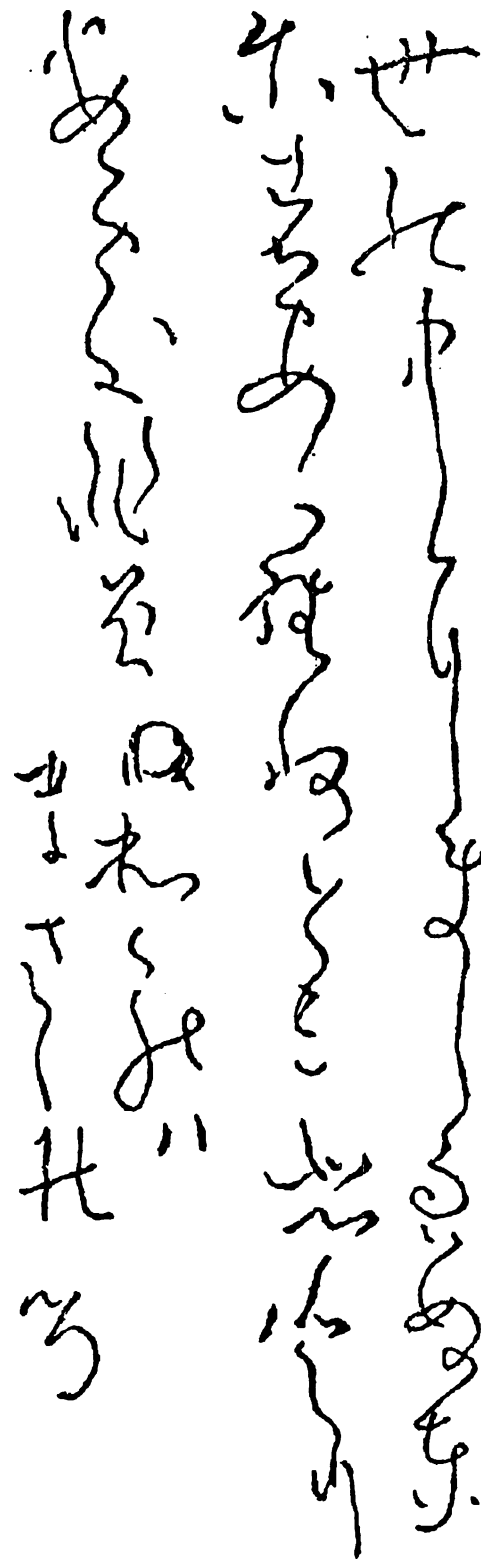
cut off where it drops so clearly  
from the shoulders, its skin  
wouldn't gleam like the fur of a  
wild animal,

and the body wouldn't send out  
light from every edge  
as a star does...  
for there is no place at all  
that isn't looking at you.  
*You must change your life.*

Rilke, like the Japanese archers, aimed not at the target (i. e., not at aesthetic or surface beauty) but at himself. (E. Herrigel) And, this task, namely, self change, is the deep task of the human heart and is the crux of all true culture, East or West. This task is open to us all, universally, and the moment we embrace it, we embrace the core concern of all Asian art. There is a poem by the Japanese poet Ryokan that embodies the proper mood we should have before ourselves, and before Japanese art. (The translator is Stephen Mitchell.)

In all ten directions of the  
universe,  
there is only one truth.  
When we see clearly, the great  
teachings are the same.  
What can ever be lost? What can  
be attained?  
If we attain something, it was  
there from the beginning of time.  
If we lose something, it is hiding  
somewhere near us.  
Look: this ball in my pocket:  
*can you see how priceless it is?*

Surely, in the deeps, beyond all name  
and form, both East and West sit quietly  
and contemplate the same ever present  
and eternal reality where all move-  
ments are quiet movements "from glory  
to glory" and there are no essential  
differences. This month we are cel-  
ebrating Japanese art. During this time  
let us look happily to see if Ryokan  
has not lost his "priceless" ball "some-  
where near us," and not forget, as the  
Japanese proverb has it, that "the world  
is one."





## FIRST STEPS TO THE 'HEART OF THE UNIVERSE'

W. Emmett Small

The Ancient Wisdom declares that all beings—those below as well as those above man—are on a path which leads to the "Heart of the Universe." It is a path of evolutionary growth. For those who travel it, somnolent and unguided, nudged forward only by Nature's measured movement, it is a slow and tedious way. For those with dawning consciousness of the vibrant meaning of life and all that happens throughout pulsing Nature, it is a faster journey because for them the way is clearer. For those far advanced, well, of them we need not now speak. They are of the ranks of those who have seen with opened vision into Nature's heart, and know. But about beginnings we may say a few words.

As a preliminary step you must go beyond the divisions we know today as science and philosophy and religion, and reach toward that apex where all three meet. There, before they break into specialization—which is a partitioning and separation that has brought about a rigidity and a blindness of recognition of the source from which they issue—there, from that station, you will find the vantage point which offers clearest unobstructed vision to your eyes, which gives firmest foothold to your feet—as you seek to know Truth, to see the Path and to follow it. The slow path becomes the faster path of more conscious growth with the recognition of certain truths: first, that there is a Goal; that it is the driving destiny of all, soon or late, to reach that Goal; and that there are ways or disciplines, advantageous and tested, to aid one on the way. With beginning steps you come to realize the impelling force of the statement that Man is a copy of the Universe, that what are called in theosophical parlance his "principles" are likenesses or reflections of the seven Cosmic Principles spoken of in the esoteric philosophy; that in reality Man is an unevolved universe, yet through the unrolling

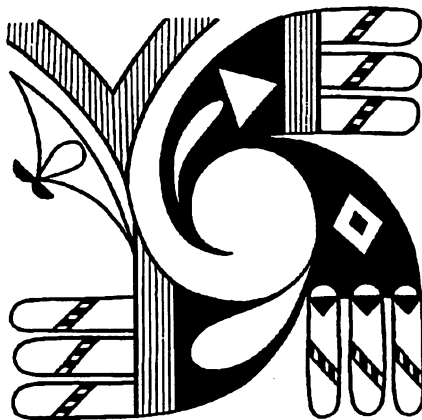
cycles of time to be fully awakened to his sublime capacities, but having all, ALL, within him, only needing leading out, needing unfolding.

A whole philosophy can be summarized by a sign, a symbol, an ideograph, a pictograph, even by a word. All these are universal ways to convey a thought, a message, an idea. "Symbols are embodied, compressed, ideas," says H.P. Blavatsky,<sup>1</sup> "combining the conception of the Divine Invisible with the earthly visible. The former is derived from the latter strictly through analogy according to the hermetic formula—'as below, so it is above.'" When we use a word as simile, as metaphor, it carries more than the direct meaning of the actual word. It pushes back and extends the horizon of the thought. This is an old method of teaching. The simile, of course must be apt in its relatedness, in its inherent elasticity to stretch from the limited or constricted to a reach of thought beyond the accepted prosaic meaning. Thus it can range from the simple to the most complex. Let us take one and relate it to the idea of the unfolding self.

Man, let us say, is a spider who weaves his web out of the stuff of himself. That stuff is also part and parcel of his environment, his world, not different from it. As the spider feeds on his garden-world or attic-environment so does man draw nourishment from his universe which he has made for himself. Out of an ancient past he comes lonely into his little world, forgetful of who he is or what he is or why he is. But the substance of the answers to these riddles lies within

him; and life is a matter of finding those answers. If he has not effectively buried all intuition, awareness comes. It comes from within: a more conscious reassociating himself with the Being he essentially is. He is a Spider recreating his own pattern out of himself; he is re-collecting powers, abilities, and skills, and these become the visible threads of his destiny as he weaves his web again. He will throw filament after filament from himself in the process of exploration, discovery and, eventually finding—himself.

The poet, Walt Whitman, puts it this way:<sup>2</sup> "A noiseless, patient spider, I marked, where, on a little promontory, it stood, isolated; Marked how, to explore the vacant, vast surrounding, It launched forth filament, filament, filament out of itself; Ever unreeling them—ever tirelessly speeding them And you, O my Soul, where you stand, Surrounded, surrounded, in measureless oceans of space, Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing—seeking the spheres to connect them; Till the bridge you will need, be formed—till the ductile anchor hold; Till the gossamer thread you fling, catch somewhere, O my Soul." That constantly weaving, unfolding process of what there is within you, it would not be fair to say is all there is to this business of finding the Self, yet it suggests the essence of it; it points to a method and a way by which the Reincarnating Ego, the Spider—you—unwinding, spinning, weaving, come to grow familiar with the knowledge of your universal "home." Everywhere in Nature these signs surround us, and from them we can draw analogies helpful to an understanding of what in esotericism is called the Path. We emerge into the world helpless, dependent, physically needing mother-watchfulness and guidance. We adjust and explore and learn and grow to toddlers and then to a more Columbus-charting of our own navigation and exploration. The process becomes more mental. We learn of substance, of earth, of sea, of stars, and call these things science. We study the ways of the brain and mind, its



functioning, its aberrations, its quality, and call it physiology and psychology. We ponder and muse on man's thought and inner rationalizing, and call it philosophy or mysticism. But we are ever our own Spider, using the stuff of ourself and of our world around us.

And this weaving and exploring continue year after year, so that with mounting decades we enter that part of life richest, most rewarding in our ability to apply what we learn, in relating ourselves to the universe more consciously and more expertly, in seeing more clearly pattern and purpose, in more willingly determining for ourself a behavior astutely and wisely conforming to the ways of wisdom. By then, you say, it is time to "die." Ah, it is time to carry forward that which we are—the essence that grows and grows from life to life!

One of the old schools of learning that taught by this method of analogy flourished in the first centuries of our Christian era. Then the "god-taught" Ammonius Saccas lectured in the halls of Alexandria, followed later by Plotinus, Iamblichus, and Porphyry in the flowing tide of that former Messianic cycle which had its beginnings some 2160 years ago. This method of analogy was a way of "leading out" the locked up wisdom within the pupil.

Recognizing that Man and the Universe are one and not separate, with the powers and energies and forces of the universe lying innate in man, analogy was the prick the teacher used to surprise or to goad or force this

*The answer, then, is simple:  
Forget the demands of  
personality and follow the  
dictates of one's Real Self.*

wisdom out and to the surface, so that suddenly, as with the Zen satori (a discipline, says D.T. Suzuki, which "consists in acquiring a new viewpoint for looking into the essence of things"),<sup>3</sup> enlightenment came.

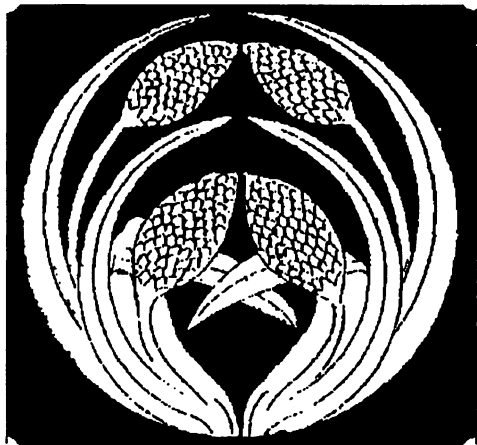
H.P. Blavatsky states that these early Alexandrian Neoplatonists were called Analogeticists "because of their practice of interpreting all sacred legends and narratives, myths and mysteries, by a rule or principle of analogy and correspondence, so that events that were related as having occurred in the external world were regarded as expressing operations and experiences of the human soul...."<sup>4</sup> The Greek myth of Theseus and his battling the Minotaur will serve as an illustration. Theseus was son of Aegeus, king of Athens. He had been separated from his father since birth; but after trials and conquests he returned home, acknowledged by his sire as successor to the throne. And then the great test came. Dire affliction weighed upon the Athenians at this time. They were forced to send yearly tribute of seven youths and seven maidens to feed the bull-headed and man-bodied monster which dwelt in the labyrinth of King Minos of Crete. Of this woe Theseus determined to free his countrymen or die in the attempt. He set forth, but before he left Athens, Minos' daughter Ariadne gave him a clue, or ball of thread, the gift of Vulcan, in fear lest he lose his way in the perplexing and perverse alleys of the labyrinth. Unscathed, he slew the Minotaur; but it was only by the unraveled filament of thread that he was able to retrace his former path and find his way back and out to sunlight and safety.

The symbolism is clear. You are the Reincarnating Self, Child of the King, your divine parent, from whom you

are at first estranged but to whom you win your way back by heroic deeds; and the thread or filament given by the gods is the wisdom-knowledge of truth inherent in the universe itself, which will safely lead you along the path to the sought for Goal.

There are, of course, more deeply hidden truths in the story. Much of the ancient teaching given in the Mystery Schools, as H.P. Blavatsky indicates, followed this same method of instruction. At least it was the procedure in the Lesser Mysteries, which were mainly of dramatic form, a method of preserving and guarding truth, not revealing too much of it, yet giving hint and clue for the perceptive. In the Greater Mysteries direct instruction was given, teaching about the inner constitution of man and the hierarchies in filling the universe. Blavatsky's *Isis and The Secret Doctrine* and G. de Purucker's *The Esoteric Tradition* and *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* contain authentic passages about these ancient schools of Eleusis, Samothrace, ancient Persia, Egypt and India. The study of the Mysteries and initiatory rites, indeed the whole subject of Initiation, is one to approach with caution, for perhaps no other page of theosophical literature has invited more deserved censure and even open ridicule from intelligent critics. Much that has been written about it is sheer nonsense and has come from the misinformed and uninstructed. First—and too much emphasis cannot be laid on this—first we should read and study and absorb the basic theosophical teachings. These give firm foundation. Only then can study of the more difficult and technical be safely undertaken. To indulge in wildly imaginative speculation based on psychic vagaries is not a treading of the Path. Think and aspire, we are told, study and reach upward—and let growth come from within.

The real initiations of old, under whatever authentic auspices they took place, were geared, all of them, to the movements of the Universal Nature. The major ones took place at the periods of the two solstices and equinoxes, those





points in the year's cycling called by Plato the "Cross of the Year." At these times the soul of the initiate, under test, was aided to leave its body and enter consciously the spheres of the universe it sought knowledge of: the planets, the moon, the sun. It was taught to become one with them and return to the entranced body with this knowledge. When Plotinus spoke of being "lifted up" three times in his life, it was to these sublime experiences he was referring.

The serious student, if he wants a bona fide manual on initiation, will find it in *The Voice of the Silence*. Its three fragments summarize the esoteric knowledge derived from "The Book of the Golden Precepts" which H.P. Blavatsky learned by heart and translated for her western readers. It is a work which, she says, "forms part of the same series as that from which the 'Stanzas' of the Book of Dzyan were taken, on which the Secret Doctrine is based."<sup>5</sup> From the thirty-nine treatises of the ninety that H.P.B. learned by heart, she made, she says, "a judicious selection" only from those best suited to "the few real mystics in the Theosophical Society, and which are sure to answer their needs."<sup>6</sup>

The book is "Dedicated to the Few," for only the few are esoterically ready now; yet, it becomes clear, the "few" who read and understand must seize the essential paradox of *The Voice* and realize that the Path is for the Many—eventually; that is the destiny of ALL in the rolling cycles to place their feet

on it consciously. The burden of the whole treatise is not only that there is a Way, a Great Destiny for all, but that once you begin to gain spiritual knowledge you must not use the gifts for your own rest and bliss and glory. What you receive you must pass on in helping others: "...the stream must not become a stagnant pond." You must "step out of sunlight into shade to make more room for others"; "...to live to benefit mankind is the first step." The climax of the book is in the section called "The Two Paths," where the immensely important distinction is made between what is known in esotericism as the Pratyeka-Buddha and the Buddha of Compassion, a point of teaching western scholars have consistently misunderstood. The Pratyeka Buddha, in Mahayana Buddhism, is a holy individual who, through spiritual achievement through aeons, has reached Buddhahood, enters Nirvana, and enwraps himself in its supernal bliss. He leaves behind mankind and the thought of mankind. He has raised himself to the spiritual world of his own self and so to say becomes crystallized in its spirituality. The Bodhisattva, called the Buddha of Compassion, has also raised himself to the higher realms of his own being, but, having gained the right to Nirvana, renounces it that he may remain among mankind as a helper and inspirer. And that in its sternest, sweetest, most compelling "essentialness" is the quintessence of Altruism.

He who becomes Pratyeka Buddha, makes his obeisance but to his Self. The Bodhisattva who has won the battle, who holds the prize within his palm, yet says in his divine compassion: "For others' sake this great reward I yield"—accomplishes the greater Renunciation.

AS A VIOLET OF THE WORLD IS HE."<sup>8</sup>

In the end the reward of the Buddha of Compassion is beyond all telling; but for long aeons he stands captive to his own love and pity and compassion for humanity, and advances not. He has renounced for himself the Great Peace in order to

help, guide, teach and protect mankind. This is the Great Sacrifice.

Far, far away, the vision now of this divine act and sacrifice. Yet it is the daily doing, the action and the refraining from action, that offers the means and comprises the steps toward that supreme end. This is the daily "initiation" we are concerned with: the doing well of our simplest duty, the wise fulfilling of our essential and individual responsibilities; the sustaining of the "right attitude" toward all life, toward all that lives.

Again we turn to our western voice, rough but intuitive, as Whitman sings:

Greater than stars or suns,

Bounding, O soul, thou journeyest forth;

—What love, than thine and ours could wider amplify?

What aspirations, wishes, outvie thine and ours, O soul?

What dreams of the ideal? What plans of purity, perfection, strength?

What cheerful willingness, for others' sake, to give up all?

For others' sake to suffer all?

Reckoning ahead, O Soul, when you, the time achieved.

(The seas all crossed, weathered the capes, the voyage done),

Surrounded, copest, frontest God, yieldest, the aim attained...<sup>9</sup>

In phrases more attuned to Eastern esoteric philosophy, redolent of the sanctuary, *The Voice of the Silence* speaks:

"A Master has arisen, A MASTER OF THE DAY! He standeth now like a white pillar to the west, upon whose face the rising Sun of thought eternal pureth forth its first most glorious waves. His mind, like a becalmed and boundless ocean, spreadeth out in shoreless space. He holdeth life and death in his strong hand.... Now he shall surely reach his great reward! Shall he not use the gifts which it confers for his own rest and bliss, his well-earned wealth and glory—he the subduer of the great Delusion? Nay, O thou candidate for Nature's hidden lore! If one would follow in the steps



of holy Tathagata, these gifts and powers are not for Self... Now bend thy head and listen well, O Boddhisattva: Compassion speaks and saith: "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?..."

"Thou shalt attain the seventh step and cross the gate of final knowledge but only to wed woe—. If thou wouldst be Tathagata, follow upon thy predecessor's steps; remain unselfish till the endless end.

"Thou art enlightened—Choose thy way.<sup>10</sup>"

Last things lie hidden in the first; the most complex in the simple; a symbol preserves the deepest metaphysics; the great embodies the small; the child is father to the man; as below, so it is above. All instruction on the long Path of Self-unfoldment is locked within the meaning of two words:

Compassion and Altruism. The glorious last step lies in its trembling beginnings, that last step which is the GREAT SACRIFICE, seen dimly, dimly now, but which we know sustains the worlds.

#### References

<sup>1</sup>H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, I, 22.

<sup>2</sup>Walt Whitman, "A Noiseless, Patient Spider."

<sup>3</sup>Daisetz T. Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*.

<sup>4</sup>H.P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, p.2.

<sup>5</sup>H.P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*

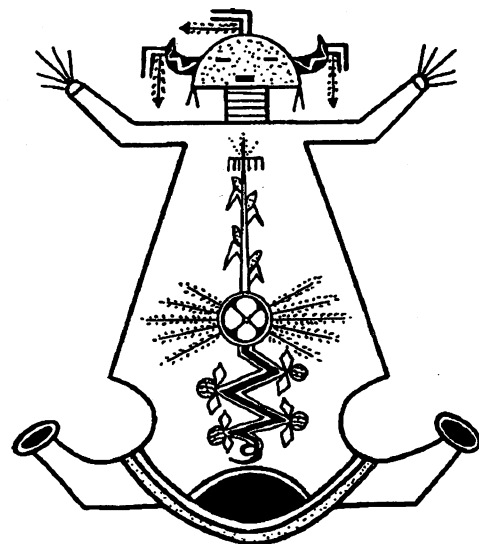
<sup>7</sup>*ibid*

<sup>8</sup>*ibid*

<sup>9</sup>Walt Whitman, "Passage to India."

<sup>10</sup>H.P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*.

—The American Theosophist,  
Fall 1971



## THE ESSENCE OF THE TEACHING

*Sri Sankaracharya*

*(Charles Johnston translation)*

Seer and Seen—The form is seen, the eye is seer; the mind is both seen and seer. The changing moods of mind are seen, but the witnessing Self, the seer, is never seen.

The eye, remaining one, beholds varying forms; as, blue and yellow, coarse and fine, short and long; and differences such as these.

The mind, remaining one, forms definite intentions, even while the character of the eye varies, as in blindness, dullness, or keen-sightedness; and this holds also of hearing and touch.

The conscious Self, remaining one, shines on all the moods of mind: on desire, determination, doubt, faith, unfaith, firmness and the lack of it, shame, insight, fear, and such as these.

This conscious Self rises not, nor has its setting, nor does it come to wax or wane; unhelped, it shines itself, and illumines others also.

The Personal Idea This illumining comes when the ray of consciousness enters the thinking mind; and the thinking mind itself is of twofold nature. The one part of it is the personal idea; the other—art is mental action.

The ray of consciousness and the personal idea are blended together, like the heat and the hot iron ball. As the personal idea identifies itself with the body, it brings that also a sense of consciousness.

The personal idea is blended with the ray of consciousness, the body, and the witnessing Self, respectively—

through the action of innate necessity, of works, and of delusion.

Since the two are bound up together, the innate blending of the personal idea with the ray of consciousness never ceases; but its blending with the body ceases, when the works wear out; and with the witnessing Self, through illumination.

When the personal idea melts away in deep sleep, the body also loses its sense of consciousness. The personal idea is only half expanded in dream, while in waking it is complete.

The power of mental action, when the ray of consciousness has entered into union with it, builds up mind-images in the dream-state; and external objects, in the waking state.

The personal form, thus brought into being by the personal idea and mental action, is of itself quite lifeless. It appears in the three modes of consciousness; it is born, and so also dies.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### THE GODS AWAIT

by Katherine Tingley. Second and Revised Edition. Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1992, xii + 150 pp. Price: (U.S.) \$9.00 Cloth, \$6.00 softcover.

Of all the major players on the Theosophical stage following the death of William Q. Judge in 1896, the most enigmatic is surely Katherine Tingley, founder - and leader until her death in 1929 - of the Theosophical Society headquartered at Point Loma, California. Her accomplishments there, many and impressive, and recorded in Emmett A. Greenwalt's *California Utopia: Point Loma, 1897-1942*. To date, however, no biography has been published, and she remains something of a mystery.

Mrs. Tingley wrote little, compared to the literary outputs of several of her contemporaries, and not even all of her writings are in print. However, in recent years, efforts to remedy this situation have resulted in *Theosophy: The Path of the Mystic* (Theosophical University Press, 1977), *The Wisdom of the Heart* (Point Loma Publications, 1978), and now *The Gods Await*.

*The Gods Await* consists of a number of relatively short pieces which reflect her philosophy and work. Although the first person singular appears occasionally, there is not a trace of ego in this book. Included are examples of her mystic bent, and her compassion in dealing with the downtrodden. Here are wise words about the problems of war, crime, vivisection, poverty, etc., and the relevance of Theosophy to their solution. Of special interest is the inclusion of a brief reminiscence of Mrs. Tingley's first meeting with William Q. Judge.

Such a book does not lend itself easily to review, so perhaps its quality may be conveyed by means of a brief sample of her style:

"...the religion which alone will fitly correspond to our innate religious nature will be a universal system of human brotherhood based on the knowledge that we are essentially

divine - a system that will warm our hearts with the knowledge that there is nothing outside ourselves that can save us or damn, that it is we ourselves who alone must and can work out our own salvation." (p. 11)

The concept of brotherhood was paramount in Katherine Tingley's philosophy. *The Gods Await* attests to this quality without flaunting it. Her approach to brotherhood was hands-on. Her work with the poor, and with refugees deserves to be better known.

A Foreword by Grace F. Knoche makes a fitting introduction to this worthwhile reissue.

—Ted G. Davy, *The Canadian Theosophist*, Sept. & Oct. 1992.

### HPB: THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE AND INFLUENCE OF HELENA BLAVATSKY, THE FOUNDER OF THE MODERN THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT.

By Sylvia Cranston. A Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam Book, published by G. P. Putnam & Sons, New York. Publication date: January 1993. ISBN 0-87477-688-0, 656 pages, 6x9, illustr. Approximately \$35.00 hard cover.

The book contains seven parts, including 82 chapters, preface, chronology, notes, bibliography, and index, plus 31 plates. The 1,167 notes cover 58 pages, the bibliography 170 entries. In addition there are numerous footnotes. It will be seen that this is the most comprehensive in depth effort to date on this subject.

There have been 18 biographies of Helena Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society, but this is the first of *HPB* and *Theosophy*. "What is Theosophy? It is a Koan — a koan is a formulation, pointing the way to ultimate truth. They can not be solved by recourse to logical reasoning, but only by awakening a deeper level of the mind beyond the discursive intellect" (Prof. Ralph Hannon, p. 143).

Those of us familiar with most of the printed material on Blavatsky have



a tendency to feel we have a pretty good overview. This work proves that assumption wrong! It fills in many gaps due to the translation of numerous newly discovered Russian letters and articles. Who would have dreamed there was so much hidden? That so many world figures were influenced by this entity, and that so much *restraint* was constantly exercised? There are accounts that help to explain the Tibet sojourns, early years; and others that show Marion Mead and Solovyov for what they are. There are quotes from modern science that corroborate the SD and Theosophy; a plethora of interesting sidelights, such as Mary Gebhard being a pupil of Eliphas Levi; and the final note on the Hodgson Report of the SPR. Interestingly, a tremendous resurgence of interest in Theosophy followed, and *Lucifer* and *The Path* started as a result.

But the real value in this work is that it includes the *teachings*, in concert with the biography of an emerging adept, the chela, HPB. This is the first book which captures the essence of the message...the attitude, the self-sacrifice, the restraint, the *purpose*, and the potential of mankind. The value of the book is impossible to over-emphasize. It is a major contribution, and worth far more than its price.

— Richard Robb

### THE POTENTIAL OF OUR OWN UNIQUENESS

Dr. Bernard S. Siegel of New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A., is a paediatric and general surgeon with a mystic bent. In his book, *Peace, Love and Healing: Body-Mind Communication and the Path to Self-Healing*, he observes that the more he has seen the workings of the universe and of the microcosm, man, the more mystical he has become. As

a surgeon, he has seen "miracles" daily. "The body knows much more than I do," he confesses. In fact, every time he has performed surgery, he has relied on its wisdom, "because I don't know why a wound heals or how anaesthesia works (nor does anyone else). Neither do I understand how a fertilized egg grows to be a human being." What he does know, he says, is that each cell, organ, system of organs, and the person as a whole, is directed by what he calls the "loving intelligence of energy."

Dr. Siegel believes that our aim should be to achieve our full growth and potential as human beings:

Few of us live up to the potential of our own uniqueness. In fact, for many people it takes an illness to put them on the path to self-realization. Their bodies have to get sick in order

for their lives to heal. ...As a woman in one of my workshops told me recently, some of the most exciting opportunities of our lives come cleverly disguised as insoluble difficulties.

Instead of judging the events in our lives as good or bad, right or wrong, we must recognize that, of itself, nothing is good or bad, and everything has the potential to help us get back on the universe's schedule. This does not mean that we have to like what happens, but simply that we must remain open to the uses even of adversity. A crisis, be it a health problem or something else, may serve as a redirection—or, as I often describe it, a reset button—that starts you up again. ...The greatest lesson people learn from life-threatening illnesses is the difference between what is and is not important...

Today many scientists think we should not talk about a central nervous system and an endocrine system and an immune system, but rather one healing system, which constitutes a sort of superintelligence within us. Just as that healing system can be set in motion by self-affirming beliefs, self-negating or repressive emotional patterns can do the reverse.

As often happens, it is personal affliction that makes us turn our attention to matters "other-worldly." Among the four classes of men who worship Krishna, the Self—that is, seek refuge in that Self—are the afflicted. Thus even affliction can be considered a blessing if it brings about a change of attitude, if it wakes us up to a new beginning, a more meaningful life.

*The Theosophical Movement,  
Bombay, India, May 1992.*

## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### WORLD PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

To be held August 28-September 5, 1993, at Chicago, Illinois, USA. History students will recall the prominent participation by Theosophists at the Parliament a hundred years ago, and the effective addresses they gave. Will Theosophy be represented this time? And by whom?

For full information about registration and program contact: Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, Post Office Box 1630, Chicago, IL 60690. Tel: (312) 629-2990.

### EDMONTON THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

Beginning with September the Lodge entered its ninth year of study of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, augmented this year with a bi-monthly Sunday evening class on *The Mandukya Upanishad* conducted by a professor of religious studies from the University of Alberta who is also a TS member in Canada and who occasionally attends the regular TS meetings in

Edmonton. As our correspondents, Ernest & Rogelle Pelletier, sum it up: "It should prove to be an interesting year." We are also grateful to receive from that Lodge a year's subscription to our *Eclectic* from nine new subscribers in Edmonton, Wetaskiwin, St. Albert, and Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

### KROTONA INSTITUTE, SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY

The opening of its Fall Term of Studies began September 26 with a public lecture by June Singer, Ph. D. on the subject: "At the Edge of the Universe: Where Science and Spirit Merge." Dr. Singer is a founder of the Jung Institute of Chicago, and has written a new book, *A Gnostic Book of Hours*.

Courses include: "The Way and the Gods" by Dr. Robert Ellwood. (A look at the major non-Buddhist spiritual traditions of China and Japan: Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, and the new religions of Japan) - "Studies in the Mahatma Letters" by Joy Mills (A series focusing on some of the teachings concerning various aspects of the



esoteric philosophy, with particular attention to Letter 16). - "The Key to Theosophy: A Worldview and a Way of Life" by Shirley Nicholson (In this book H. P. B. sets forth the principles of the spiritual life and defines the purposes of the Theosophical Society.) - "Esoteric Buddhism" by Muriel Daw (This series will focus on the rich and subtle practices that help us realize the teachings which allow Body, Speech and Mind to manifest for the benefit of all beings.) - "Mandala: The Magic Circle" also by Muriel Daw. The traditional mandala in Buddhism is a meeting point between each individual and the powers which emanate directly from the Ground of Being.

### COLLECTOR'S ITEM

The Wall Clock in colors, with a time-piece circling the historic Theosophi-



cal Seal, mentioned in our last *Eclectic* is now reduced in price to \$24.95 (\$5.00 off). Included with each clock is an explanation of the seal. (Add \$3.75 for shipping and handling in the USA, and if by parcel post service, \$6.25. For Canadian orders, add \$4.85; and for all other countries \$7.55. Send orders or inquire direct to S. M. Range, P. O. Box 34, Weaubleau, Missouri 66774.

### THE NETHERLANDS THEOSOPHICAL CONVENTION OF 1992

The title was: "Encouragement for the Future," and the beautiful card with greetings sent us announcing the program was dated Rotterdam, September 27, 1992, and that was the so anniversary of the passing of G. de Purucker, head of the Point Loma T.S. It was signed by some 20 friends attending, among whom we recognize the names of Jan van der Sluis, Egbert Tillema, Willy Schmit, Nel Fonhof, Bep Schoppa, Bobby Kresse, Puck Geleïnse and Co Post. To all our best thanks and strong hopes for further harmonious gatherings passing on to others the Great Teachings.

### TO OUR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS AROUND THE WORLD

To friends who gave small regular monthly donations, and to those others who, when circumstances permit, are able to contribute the larger amount, our warm and grateful thanks. It all helps to keep alive and spread the true Message of Theosophy, which we know is part of your own pledge. We mention several cities in the USA where some live: Buffalo, Chicago, Miami, San Antonio, Plano (Texas), Los Angeles, Ojai; but also from Berlin and Nuremberg in Germany, Trollhattan (Sweden), Holland, and Paris.

### INFORMATIONSLATT FOR THEOSOPHY IN DEUTSCHLAND

From Helga Rex (Gruneburgweg 106, 6000 Frankfurt am Main 1 Germany) we have received No. 23, October-December 1992 issue of this 36-page booklet announcing all Theosophical active centers in Germany, all 58 of them, giving their "contact persons"

and addresses, listing dates for seminars and summer schools, and announcing the Theosophical Forum held October 10-11, 1992 in Bad Hersfeld. About this latter we may have further news in our next *Eclectic*. But here in this quarterly information booklet we find listed all theosophical groups, not those of only one separate society. It requires much work but is an example of overall theosophical service.

### SPIRITUELLES ERWACHEN (SPIRITUAL AWAKENING)

This is a translation in German by Verlag Esoterische Philosophie GmbH, the publishing branch of the Hannover Theosophische Gesellschaft. The content is from *Wind of the Spirit: A Selection of Talks on Theosophy* as related primarily to Human Life and Human Problems, a third printing of which Point Loma Publications produced in 1976. The German Edition is published commemorating the 50th anniversary of the death of G de P., hard cover, with a Foreword by Hermann Knoblauch and Barbel Ackermann.

### LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

From Dr. Robert Bonnell, President of the Long Beach Branch of the TS in America (Adyar) we have received the program for October/December 1992. It includes talks on interesting subjects by a wide variety of speakers: Marguerite Lovett, Minister, Unitarian Church ("Spiritual Humanism"); Kara Morgan, M.F.C.C. Psychotherapist ("Well Being Through Mind-Body Synthesis"); John Coker, Lecturer, Theosophical Society, Pasadena ("The Search for Truth"); Terry Lewis, Minister of Counseling ("The Essence of Gnosticism"); and Warren Weinstein, Professor of Philosophy, L.B.C.C. ("Mysteries of the Kabbalah").

### PHOTOCOPIES OF THE THEOSOPHIST, VOLS. 3-8

Complete archival quality reproductions of Photocopies of The Theosophist, vols. 3-8, are now available. Three different sets of original volumes were

utilized to obtain a complete master copy of each of these volumes.

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## AND OF BOOKS...

### FROM POINT LOMA IN DECEMBER 1992

*Messages to Conventions and other Writings on the Policies, Work and Purposes of the T.S.* - G. de Purucker  
Index to 3 bound vols. of "The Eclectic Theosophist," 1971-91

*True Messiah: The Story and Wisdom of Apollonius of Tyana* 3 BC-AD 96, by Phillip A. Malpas (2nd printing)

*Geocentric Sidereal Ephemeris and Jyotish Panchanga*, July 1992 through December 1993 (Educational Sciences Corporation of America)

Pocket Version also of above *Ephemeris*

### AND EARLY IN 1993

*Deity, Cosmos and Man* by Geoffrey A. Farthing, Director Blavatsky Trust, London, England

*The Vedanta Commentaries of H.P. Blavatsky*, compiled and annotated by H.J. Spierenburg

### (ADDED TO POINT LOMA LIBRARY SERIES):

*Three Steps to Infinity*, by L. Gordon Plummer

*The Sun of Righteousness: Notes upon the Singular Resemblance between the Life-Histories of the different World-Saviors; and an Outline of the Theosophical Interpretation of the "Solar Myth,"* by G. de Purucker

*The Mystery-Tale of Jesus the Avatara: Clothed with the Sun* by G. de Purucker, 3rd edition

*The Esoteric Doctrine of Gautama the Buddha* by G. de Purucker (3rd printing)

*The Science of Nature* by Oluf Tyberg (Preface by Henry T. Edge)

### AND FURTHER ABOUT THE ABOVE:

*Messages to Conventions*

G. de Purucker upholds with vigor and unwavering consistency the policies of the Theosophical Society as outlined by H.P. Blavatsky as mouth-piece of the Masters. Theosophists studying with impartiality the history of the T.S. and questioning What of the future? should take heart from this

record of fidelity to the Masters' original program. This volume hammers home those fundamental principles that rise above all barriers and differences principles which should be loyally embraced by all Theosophists irrespective of Sectional affiliation. Here is an eloquent plea for all Theosophists to practice the principles of life and conduct they widely proclaim; a strong voice giving sound and needed counsel for today and decades to come.

Paper, with Index, 256 pages, \$7.50

*True Messiah*

*The Story and Wisdom of Apollonius of Tyana* 3BC-AD96. In this narrative Philip Malpas overviews the life story and wanderings of the Pythagorean teacher, Apollonius of Tyana. Considered by his contemporaries the greatest spiritual influence of the time, his wisdom and story is here insightfully presented. To some he was the Messiah figure himself whose life and wisdom paralleled in many ways that of Jesus the Christ.

Paperback 160 pages, \$7.95

*Deity, Cosmos and Man*

The author, Geoffrey A. Farthing, is Director of Blavatsky Trust, and a former General Secretary of the Theosophical Society, (Adyar) England. From chapter titles we gather something of the broad scope of this important study: 1. About Esoteric Science. 2. The Scope and Framework of Man and Cosmos. 3. The Occult Constitution of Man and Cosmos. 4. The Hierarchies of Being. 5. Akasha and the Astral Light. 6. Elements and Elementals. 7. Law in Cosmos and Human Life. 8. Death and Rebirth. 9. Origins. 10. Globes, Rounds and Races. 11. Ever-Becoming, the Processes of Evolution. 12. Spiritualism and Psychism. 13. Spiritual Development. 14. Religion.

Approx. 300 pages.

*The Vedanta Commentaries of H.P. Blavatsky*

Writes the compiler and annotator H.J. Spierenburg: This is the third of the series of Commentaries of HPB.



The earlier ones are: *The New Testament* and *The Buddhism*. "With this third I have decided to include some of the writings of H.P.B.'s former co-worker, the Brahman T. Subba Row (1856-1890) who, according to HPB was the best authority in India on the esotericism of Advaita Vedanta. Since they both were pupils of the same teacher, viz. the Master M., their teachings about Vedanta stem from the same source and, therefore, complement each other."

170 pages, plus 90 pages bibliography and index.

*Three Steps to Infinity*

By Gordon Plummer. This will be another of our new Point Loma Library Series. Ted G. Davy, former editor of *The Canadian Theosophist*, writes of it: "This is fascinating stuff. The author takes us relatively painlessly through such concepts as constants, logarithms, the Divine Proportion, and other Universal concepts", relating them all to a theosophical interpretation of the Universe. His final chapter deals with the Hierarchy of Compassion."

*Index to our ECLECTIC THEOSOPHIST*

Compiled by Mark Jaqua, \$4.00 (?)

Vol. I: No.1, Mar. 1971 to No.43, Nov. 1977, \$15.00

Vol. II: No.44, Jan. 1978 to No.84, Nov./Dec. 1984, \$15.00

Vol. III: No.85, Jan./Feb. 1985 to No.126, Nov./Dec. 1991, \$20.00

*Also in Steady Demand worldwide: Reincarnation, The Phoenix Fire Mystery, Head and Cranston: An East-West dialogue on death and rebirth from the worlds of religion, science, psychology, philosophy, art and literature. With Notes and Index, 620 pages, \$14.95*

### LATER IN 1993

*The Seven Jewels of Wisdom: Commentary on The Esoteric Philosophy*, by Students of G. de Purucker (in Com-

memoration of 50 years since GdeP's death.) 2 or 3 volumes.

All above direct from Point Loma Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 6507, San Diego, California 92166.

Direct from Isis Books, P.O. Box 444,

Grand Rapids, Ohio 43522, Mark Jaqua compiler: *George Cardinal LeGros Theosophical Articles and Verse*. "A collection of exceptional material," writes Jaqua, "from an individual of mystic temperament and insight and also a

student of technical Theosophy. His articles are also rare in that they do not avoid difficult conclusions based on the study of original Theosophy."

With index, 212 pages, \$8.50 (\$1.00 postage; \$2.00 overseas surface).

## FROM LETTERS RECEIVED

*Rev. Marguerite Hanny, Jenks, Oklahoma:* The PLP *must* continue to function. It is one of the Bright Lights in this confusing, blinding, materialistic world, H.P.B. would not have it any other way, I'm sure. Through the years the *Eclectic* files have helped me in so many different ways. When I change my addresses *they move also!*...The Library Series you speak of does indeed intrigue me. (And she sends a helpful contribution.)

*M. F. van Ruijven, Rijswijk, The Netherlands:* What we need is cooperative workers who do not criticize each other and are willing to set all differences of opinion aside and form a true theosophical union. There are terrible things going on in the world. Such a pity that people will not listen to the teachings. So now the result is materialism, egoism, selfishness, with resulting aggression and cruelty. We are living at the end of the century and of cycles, not forgetting the one we are in, the Kali Yuga. What have we all to look forward to? Might our world conditions be due to what G. de P. writes of in *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, p. 93, that HPB points to the outbreak of psychic disturbance in our time, pointing out that the world is entering upon a period when the plane on which we live and the plane on which the Karmas of Kama-loka mostly are, come close together?

*Laszlo & Sophie Reicher, Budapest, Hungary:* Thank you very much for sending us the *Esoteric Teachings of G. de Purucker*, Vols. IV-XII, which arrived here safely and in good condition. We do not know who the sponsors are for this gift but we send many thanks for all the volumes. We shall put them

into our Theosophical Library. With best wishes and greetings to you all.

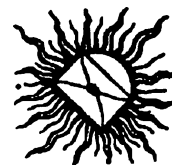
*Margaret Nowak, Detroit, Michigan:* I'm re-reading with great enjoyment *Wisdom of the Heart* and *Wind of the Spirit*. Such inspiration and peace comes as I read those wonderful truths again and again.

*Mark Jaqua, Grand Rapids, Ohio:* Another great issue of the *Eclectic*! (#3) Thanks for your continual output. It's a real beacon-light in the Theosophical world. (Enclosed check for set of bound *Eclectics*.)

*W.R. Laudahn, Ojai, California* (Referring to *Eclectic* quarterly #2, Summer 1992): I see it is keeping up the good work. In the "Letters Received" section, your humble correspondent was both praised and condemned. Just like John Cooper, how about that? This is a good sign; therefore I'd like to comment on my critic, G. Rohde.

Rohde states that "Neoplatonism came from Egypt and India." Well, both Ammonius Saccas and Plotinus were born in Egypt. At that time, Egypt was ruled by a Greek dynasty, descended from a General who served under Alexander the Great. Plotinus considered himself a Platonist. The term "Neoplatonism" was coined as recently as about 1840.

It is agreed that Plato was influenced by Pythagoras. Some claim that the thought of Pythagoras contained concepts "from the East." But others feel that these ideas were "in the air." Concepts, great or otherwise, can arise whenever and wherever people start thinking and contemplating. Then, they are "in tune with the Infinite." Such contemplating really does not



need "missionaries," Buddhist or Christian! It is true that ideas may be appropriated when one basically approves of them. In that case, the ideas of others are used to express your own ideas. There is nothing wrong with that, this happens all the time. As to "Mahatmas (Arhats)" and HPB being "Buddhists." They were not so in the strict religious sense. The "ism" they favored was true mysticism, looking to the Absolute (or "Absolute-ness," as HPB preferred). This approach is often designated Theosophia, the Gnosis, Neoplatonism, the Perennial Philosophy, etc. Anyone who claims to be a student of the Blavatsky corpus will find similar ideas scattered about therein. I have tried to concentrate on this aspect of her teachings. I pick and choose, in my opinion I choose the Truth!

*Joan Sckrabulis, Lutherville, Maryland:* Since Theosophy remains relatively obscure, it must now 'compete' with the so-called New Age or New Science movement. The general public, particularly the baby boomers who have the most \$ to spend on books and publications, seek phenomenon. We offer no quick fixes for those who aspire toward immediate enlightenment. ...The effort put forth by PLP over the years must be allowed to flourish and grow. In time, the teachings as given forth by the Masters, through our founders and teachers, will be fully embraced. Our task is to continue the

effort without questioning its current popularity...

*Mike Ashcraft, Charlottesville, Virginia* (Doing research for a thesis on education at the Theosophical community and schools at Point Loma): My work on Point Loma proceeds apace, and I grow more excited about it every day. Next week I will defend my dissertation proposal...In November I'll make a presentation on Raja Yoga education at a professional meeting...before a group of scholars. I expect positive response for the most part...

During my research, I have had the opportunity to correspond with many people, ...one is H. Arnold Barton, history professor at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. His parents were Hildor and Marguerite Barton. I read his article on Sweden at Point Loma and wrote asking him for more information, and to my pleasant surprise he wrote back saying he had lots of personal connections with Point Loma through his parents. He's promised to send me the manuscript of a history he wrote of his parents' school, the Barton School, that they ran in Los Angeles along Raja Yoga lines...It should be very illuminating. I always welcome the *Eclectic Theosophist* when it comes. Your periodical's news column helps me keep up with what's going on in the Theosophical world, and reading the articles helps me understand Theosophy a little better with each piece I read. I read with great interest your extracts from G de

P's General Letters in the Fall, 1992 issue and would like to read more...Best wishes to you and your work with Point Loma Publications and the *Eclectic Theosophist*. When I return to California I would enjoy visiting with you again...

*Charles Payton, Seattle, Washington*: The new *Eclectic* is a joy! Glad to see it is carrying forward the tradition with expanded features, book reviews, notices and reader responses. Thank you all for your dedication and labor of love.

*Emma B. Hoffman, Plano, Texas*: I look forward to every issue of your *Eclectic*. It was through you that I discovered the writings of G. de P. Thank you, and my best wishes.

*Alan Gudenowager, Brisbane, Australia*: I would like to express my appreciation of your publications. I find them better reading than those (and mentions another TS magazine). I was very impressed with the work about H.P.B.'s references to the New Testament by the Dutch scholar...(The writer is a homeopathic physician and wholistic Health practitioner).

*Ted. G. Davy, Calgary, Canada*: Our weekly class is in its second year of studying *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*. I never cease to be amazed at some of its contents, even in regard to some simple things. For instance, recently Doris identified the quotation

on p. 33 as coming from *The Light of Asia*. These are fairly familiar lines, but has anyone noticed that the first is from Book 4, the second from Book 3—yet they combine appropriately and perfectly! (Encloses check for Index to the bi-monthly *Eclectic Theosophist*.)

*Willy Schmit, The Hague, The Netherlands*: I do not know if your article about G. de P. (in last *Eclectic*) will turn 'Vox Populi' into earnest investigators, because—as you indicate—it is such a loud voice, but the opportunity is there. Also reread your articles in *Eclectic* No. 21, "Dr. de Purucker, An Invitation and a Challenge", and in *E.T.* No. 85, "Fraternization—Networking: yesterday and Today."...A good job the compilation of an Index to the 126 issues of *The Eclectic*. I think it will make the three bound vols. more inviting...We have received from Mark Jaqua his Compilation of Cardinal LeGros' articles and poems. The original style of his articles and his fine poems appeal to his readers and it is revealing that his last poem "Free" is such a comfort for those in mourning, especially for non-theosophists. We have translated it as well as possible for distribution...I often think of the time I was your guest in Point Loma and our exchange of thoughts about the work for the future. It is said that we have to cultivate our power of Imagination—looking beyond this outer world of lesser happenings into the creative world. "The T.S. must at all cost be kept a living body..."

## WARNING AND PREDICTION

Extracts from a letter written by the Master K.H. in November, 1880 to Allan Octavian Hume (1829-1912), one-time Secretary to the British Government in India, father of the Indian National Congress, distinguished ornithologist and pioneer Theosophist. The letter first was published in A.P. Sinnett's *The Occult World*, Am. Ed., Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1885. It does not appear in *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, Rider & Co., London, 1923.—Eds.

The same causes that are materializing the Hindu mind are equally affecting all Western thought. Education enthrones skepticism, but imprisons spirituality. You can do immense good by helping to give the Western nations a secure basis upon which to reconstruct their crumbling faith. And what they need is the evidence that Asiatic psychology alone supplies. Give this, and you will confer happiness of mind on thousands. The

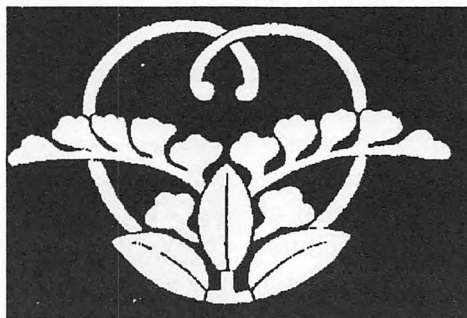
era of blind faith is gone; that of inquiry is here. Inquiry that only unmask error, without discovering anything upon which the soul can build, will but make iconoclasts. Iconoclasm, from its very destructiveness, can give nothing; it can only raze. But man cannot rest satisfied with bare negation. Agnosticism is but a temporary halt. This is the moment to guide the recurrent impulse which must soon come, and which will push the



age toward extreme atheism, or drag it back to extreme sacerdotalism, if it is not led to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans...

All are blind and there is no one to lead them. You and your colleagues may help to furnish the materials for a needed universal religious philosophy; one impregnable to scientific assault, because itself the finality of absolute science, and a religion that is indeed worthy of the name since it

includes the relations of man physical to man psychological, and of the two to all that is above and below them. Is not this worth a slight sacrifice? And if, after reflection, you should decide to enter this new career, let it be known that your society is no miracle-mongering or banqueting club, not specially given to phenomenism. It's



## WHY "SIMPLIFYING" THE TEACHINGS WON'T WORK

Mark Jaqua

"He says that people will not accept the whole truth; that unless we humour them... our philosophy will be rejected *a priori*... If they do not want the whole truth and nothing but the truth, they are welcome. But never will they find us — (at any rate) — compromising with, and pandering to public prejudices." *The Mahatma Letters* (Letter #54)

The difficulty, some say, with Theosophical Teachings is not that they are too complex for an average person to grasp—they aren't—but that they require a different state of mind or emotional set to comprehend. People cannot honestly react negatively to the rationality of the teachings for the very fact that the teachings are perfectly rational; they make sense to the intellect. The negative reaction, if there is one, is a reaction of the contrary emotional attitude toward life that most westerners are ingrained with. If real Theosophy is to be promoted, confronting this ingrained mindset can't be avoided. And this takes a modicum of courage.

The average westerner is ingrained with the idea that his eternal future is either unfathomable or more or less out of his own hands. He is at the mercy of a "God" to save him despite his shortcomings. Believing that one is eternally at the mercy of another being or unknown forces instills just the opposite emotional state of mind

compared to that instilled by Theosophical Teachings. Theosophists are convinced that our future lies solely in our own hands, and they can prove it by reason and an appeal to intuition. Being saved by someone else (vicarious atonement) is at base an effortless process. Theosophists believe that everything depends on effort. Westerners have been ingrained that "mercy" exists in the cosmos, that someone's past shortcomings don't have to catch up with him. Theosophists don't believe in the concept of extra-cosmic mercy. There is no god or being that can stop cause and effect once set in motion (karma).

Efforts at "watering down" Theosophy "so that the average person can understand it" consist in trying to fit Theosophy into ingrained Western habits of mind and emotion — and it just will not fit. The average person *can* understand our doctrines. That's not the problem. The problem is that it clashes with usually held states of mind. Theosophical doctrines represent a basic different way of looking at the world. There is no way of presenting them within the prevalent "Christian" mode of mind (and most westerners are ingrained with this state of mind, whether actively Christian or not). Christianity at base, or originally, may have presented some of the same doctrines (and Theosophists claim they

chief aim is to extirpate current superstitions and skepticism, and from long-seated ancient fountains to draw the proof that man may shape his own future destiny, and know for a certainty that he can live hereafter, if he only wills, and that all 'phenomena' are but manifestations of natural law, to try to comprehend which is the duty of every intelligent being.

—From *The Eclectic Theosophist*,  
#21, March 1974.

did) but these are not included in the typical mindset.

Theosophy shocks, and it cannot be somehow Machiavellianly threaded into the Western mindset as a painless and unobtrusive operation on the "patient". To try to do so only destroys the doctrines and the good they could do; and also then what's left—not being much different from what else is presented in the "New Age" scene and like doesn't draw much important attention.

It takes effort and time for the average westerner to "become" into a different mindset. To really present Theosophy one has to know that, while not wishing to, he may frequently offend people and their ingrained mindsets. (Won't he be glad though in the big picture of his life and lives that he said something for Truth and the betterment of All, rather than buckling under for momentary harmony or passing popularity!) This will attract people, however, that respect truth and any honest attempt at truth over those that prefer the promulgation of pollyanna.

These former are also usually the harder workers. Theosophy is for everyone, but we can't change our doctrines to *suite* everyone. Theosophy's purpose is to change things and not approach the *status quo*. Benefit is in truth and not where things are most comfortable. In presenting only the original and genuine teachings the effect produced on world thought by these *real* and hard-hitting Ideas will be infinitely greater.

## THEOSOPHY WITH TASTE



The following recipe for daily living will assure you the fullest measure of happiness as you uplift and sweeten the world around you:

One heaping morsel of an uplifting inspiration to wake up on.

Separate your emotions from your judgment, and keep on ice in a shatter-proof container.

Warm your heart in an oven set at "human-compassion" until cold indifference to your fellow-man is melted.

Strain the ruffles out of your patience to render it sweet.

Remove all pits of prejudice from your opinions.

Marinate criticism in the mellow wine of tenderness until harshness is dissolved, then use sparingly and constructively.

Pare away the rind of pride and self-righteousness from your holiness.

Sift the seeds of discontent from your attitude about your lot in life, and boil all the bitterness out of your acceptance of duty; then add a full measure of responsibility.

Whip up your strength with unflinching courage to live up to your principles, *no matter what!*

Set the dial of your consciousness to register kindness and good will to all,



and especially to those who trip your tranquility and challenge your cool.

Spice everything you do with a dash

of enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Sprinkle generously with delicious chunks of humor.

Now serve a loving slice of yourself to all who share your scene — and have a beautiful day!

—Vonda Urban

(Reprinted from *The Eclectic Theosophist*, Jan/Feb, 1982, p.3)

## IVERSON L. HARRIS AND POINT LOMA PUBLICATIONS

We so often think of Iverson, having known him since our own earliest childhood at Point Loma, and having been associated with him and the theosophical activities there for many years; and as we approach now fourteen years since his death we take the opportunity to share with new readers the several paragraphs about him in our March 1979 *Eclectic*. Iverson was one of the first children in 1900 (all five from Macon, Georgia, where I later came from) to be enrolled in the Raja Yoga School at Point Loma. He had come a year earlier with his father, Iverson L. Harris, Sr., who, representing the TS Lodge of Macon, attended the Point Loma Convention in February of 1899. Nine year old Iverson remained in PL from that date on, and was the last to leave in June of 1942 when during WW II the TS Headquarters moved to Covina, California. His wife Helen (Plummer) of over 50 years was a personal helper and assistant to Katherine Tingley, and to her we are indebted for valuable PL archival work she did despite increasing illness in her later years. These include

several important albums. We now quote from our earlier *Eclectic* article:

### IVERSON L. HARRIS

"Iverson Harris passed into the peace and light that men called death on the evening of February 13, 1979. He had suffered a cardiac arrest on the afternoon of January 31st and was taken to nearby Mission Bay Memorial Hospital in Pacific Beach where at first he seemed to be responding well. He was alert to the last, cheered by hopes of resuming the work he loved and which was indeed his life.

"Iverson was well known to the theosophical world, especially the Point Loma segment, for over six decades. He came to Point Loma in 1899 and, with four others was entered in the theosophical school there. In his early years he became traveling secretary to Katherine Tingley on her many theosophical tours. In the regime of Dr. de Purucker he was Western District Regional Vice-President of the American Section T.S., Secretary of Theosophical University, and from 1942-45 Chairman of the Society's Cabinet. In 1971 he founded and organized Point Loma Publications, Inc., of which he was President, and to this aspect of theosophical work he gave his full and

vigorous energies until the very end. He is the author of two books, *Theosophy Under Fire: a Miniature "Key to Theosophy"* and *Mme. Blavatsky Defended*, and two booklets *The Wisdom of Lao-Tse* and *The Wisdom of Confucius*, as well as a constant contributor to theosophical journals around the world.

"With his passing, it seems, an era ends, but he will long be remembered as one steadfast in duty, loyal in principle, valiant in action, and unswerving in devotion to what he felt were the highest ethics and challenges of Theosophy.

"In his departure from the stage of activity he loved, out through the wings and into the Great Silence, the Movement loses one of its most vibrant actors. To his devoted wife Katherine who brightened his latter years and her faithful support, go, we are sure from friends around their world, their warm and sympathetic understanding and love.

"The work of Point Loma Publications, Inc., we may add, and as Iverson would wish, will continue and we trust in its own modest way pursue its course as a constructive force and energy over the wide arc of the Theosophical Movement."

—W.E.S.

### AT THE TIME OF THE WINTER SOLSTICE

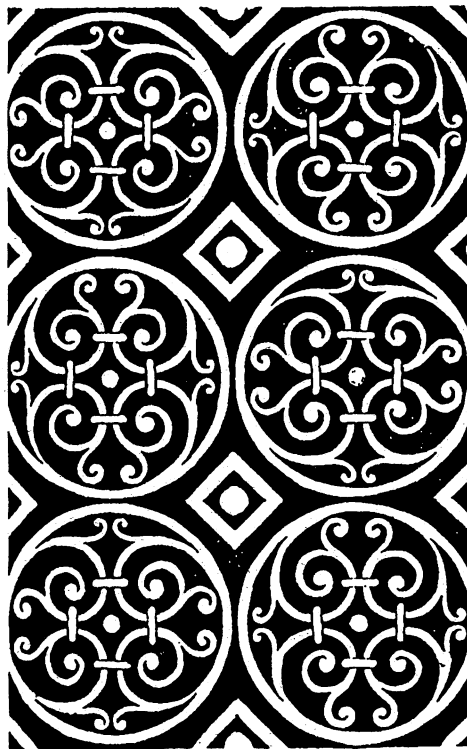
It is at certain periods of the year far more than at other times that the currents of intercommunication, which in the wide spaces of the Cosmos are the Circulations of the Universe, are more easily in thought attained to. Men in general may not know the fact, but we humans are surrounded with an atmosphere of akasa whose outer reaches stretch beyond both moon and sun into the abysses of stellar space.

Chelas in the Esoteric Schools are taught how to ascend into these higher realms of the lofty spaces of their own inner being, and thus do they realize not only their kinship with the gods, but their fundamental unity with the Silent Watcher of our own Home-Universe.

There is much more pertaining to this season of the year than even our

own Theosophical students generally realize. Resolutions made at this time in a proper spirit—in the spirit of impersonal devotion to high ideals—and with a heart overflowing with love for all that is, have a relationship with the divine; and because of this divine relationship they exercise throughout the subsequent months a silent but powerful domination over both mind and heart.

It was a knowledge: deep, wide-reaching, mystic: of these and other collateral truths of Nature, that brought



### MAKING OUR RELIGION REAL

Religion is a way of life rather than a set of dogmas. Paul, in his second letter to the Corinthians, says: "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (iii, 6). The Buddha is reported to have held his peace when a disciple asked him for a definite answer about the immortality of the soul: he knew that his words would resound over the earth and down the ages, and was loth to start a dogma; for whatever he might have said would be turned into a dogma. It was a way of life that he was teaching: live the life and you shall know the doctrine; knowledge comes by experience. Great truths may be such as cannot be formulated in words: no verbal answer would be right. But they may be realized through conduct. Was it not Carlyle who said that the end of man was a deed, not a thought alone?

Religion begins with an outpouring of the spirit by someone endowed with

a plenitude thereof, and who is therefore a Teacher. Later on it crystallizes into dogmas. Here we see the contrast between spirit and form, or life and form. Both are necessary: it is by their interaction that a plant grows. All growth seems to imply a life-cycle which begins with an exuberance of life and but little form, and ends with a hidebound form and a minimum of life. Compare the sapling with the aged tree; contrast the babe with the old man; witness any religion, starting with a Man, full of life and the spirit, with a dozen disciples; and ending with a mass of doctrines and documents

about the working of one of the Highest degrees of initiation at the time of the Winter-Solstice, and for some two weeks thereafter. Memories of those far bygone days still linger in the hearts of men at this time—memories of a time when Divine Beings were on earth, and taught their Younger Brothers, mankind. This fact was commemorated in later ages in the initiation-ceremonies of the Winter-Solstice, wherein the aspirant passing successfully through the trials, met his own inner god face to face, and being 'raised' to union therewith, became suddenly suffused with splendor, so that, as the phrase passed outwards from the crypts, he was said to be 'clothed with the sun'; and it was true—in a far more real and mystical sense than sincere but unknowing men of later times have ever realized. —G. de P.: *Fourth General Letter to Members of the T.S. (Point Loma)* December 7, 1930

religiously preserved by dispirited and disillusioned generations...

We need to go back to the idea that religion is not an exotic, a sort of drawing-room in the house of life, kept covered up and used only on state occasions; but that it is the essence of life itself. This does not mean dragging down religion to the level of vulgarity, but the raising of the tone of our life to the level of religion. A man's religion should color his every act. As a matter of fact, it does; but in the sense that we have two religions—one for everyday and one for Sundays...

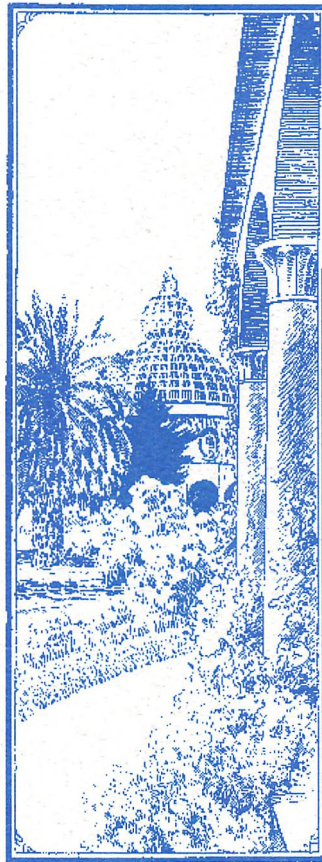
We must try to bring our religion down out of the clouds into our daily life; not by lowering the religion but by raising the life. Thus we shall move away from that duplicity or insincerity or hypocrisy which consists in living in two different atmospheres, one religious and the other not. Our life will become sincere and whole and our religion real.

Henry T. Edge in *The Theosophical Path*, (Point Loma)



*Time is the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it;  
but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and  
detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides  
away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper;  
fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with  
stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first  
letter of the alphabet. I have always been  
regretting that I was not as wise as the  
day I was born.*

*Henry David Thoreau*



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